



Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-91-173
Friday
6 September 1991

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FBIS-NES-91-173

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Primakov: Mideast Issues 'Have Retreated'

PM0509162791 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT
in Arabic 4 Sep 91 pp 1, 4

[Unattributed report: "In Exclusive Statements to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Shevardnadze: We will Support Gorbachev Despite His Mistakes; Primakov: No Place for the Middle East Question Now"]

[Excerpt] Moscow, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Eduard Shevardnadze, leader of the Movement for Democratic Reforms, has emphasized in reply to an AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT question that the Democrats support President Mikhail Gorbachev and will continue to do so despite all his mistakes.

Asked about President Gorbachev's offer to entrust him with supervising the foreign policy and foreign economic affairs sectors, Shevardnadze said that he still did not know the details of the offer and had not yet met with him, as he was very busy. He confirmed, however, that he will meet with him after the Congress of People's Deputies.

In reply to another question, Shevardnadze reaffirmed the need to keep the the Congress of People's Deputies as it is, because dissolving it would have many negative results.

Before the evening session, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT interviewed Academician Yevgeniy Primakov, member of the Security Council and adviser to President Gorbachev. He said that the sensitive internal situation in the Soviet Union is dominating everyone's attention.

He pointed out that the situation was still unstable.

In reply to a question on the Middle East, he said: Middle East issues have retreated and do not now have a place in our current thinking.

Meanwhile, Soviet Leader Mikhail Gorbachev yesterday withdrew a proposal for a smaller parliament. [passage omitted]

Iraqi Letter to Arab League Refutes POW Charges

JN0509165391 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio First
Program Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] Iraq reasserted that it is not holding any Kuwaitis in its territory, and that it has no interest in doing so. Iraq also called on the Arab League to dispatch a team to look into this affair and expose the false claims of the agent Kuwaiti authorities.

In a letter addressed to the Arab League secretary general today on the situation of Kuwaitis in Iraq, Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, minister of state for foreign affairs, said that the Kuwaiti authorities obstructed, and are still obstructing, the return of Kuwaitis from Iraq. He added that Iraq has long expressed its desire to repatriate them, made great efforts to do that, and cooperated with the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The minister of state for foreign affairs pointed out that, instead of receiving those people in accordance with the Red Cross arrangements, the Kuwaiti authorities are launching a brazen campaign of lies and deception on this issue.

The letter pointed out that this campaign confirms what Iraq has said on several occasions; namely, that the rulers of Kuwait are involved in an unending conspiracy against Iraq, serving their masters against Iraq and its unyielding people.

The minister of state for foreign affairs also noted the claims of the Kuwaiti authorities concerning Bubiyan Island, which were proven false by international investigation. He said these claims represent more evidence of the Kuwaiti rulers' conspiracy and hatred, and their attempts to create pretexts for their masters so as to continue the unjust blockade on the Iraqi people.

Palestinian Affairs

Al-Najjab Cited on 'Arafat-King Husayn Agreement

NC0609073791 (Clandestine) Voice of the Oppressed
in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] Sulayman al-Najjab, member of the PLO Executive Committee, disclosed that King Husayn of Jordan and PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat agreed to establish a joint Jordanian-Palestinian committee to formulate a joint political approach to the issue of Middle East peace. Al-Najjab said this agreement was reached during 'Arafat's recent visit to Amman.

Al-Najjab added that both sides agreed that any settlement must include the following six points:

1. Israel must withdraw from the Arab and Palestinian land it occupied since 1967, including Jerusalem.
2. The Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the establishment of their independent state must be recognized. The Palestinian side emphasized the Palestine National Council decision concerning the voluntary establishment of Jordanian-Palestinian federation.
3. The issue of Palestinian refugees must be resolved in accordance with UN resolutions.
4. Israeli settlement building must come to an immediate halt and the UN Security Council resolutions demanding the cancellation [ilgha'] of these settlements must be implemented.
5. The PLO's right to name the Palestinian delegation to the peace conference must be recognized and no one can have the right to object to any member of this delegation.
6. The Palestinian people's sovereignty over their land and natural resources must be recognized and the Palestinians should be given international protection throughout all stages of a solution.

Personalities Meet Italian Minister in Jerusalem

LD0509201791 *Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1702 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] Before noon today, a group of Palestinian personalities met Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis and his accompanying delegation, who are currently on a visit to Israel, at the Italian Embassy in Jerusalem. The meeting lasted about one and a half hours and was attended on the Palestinian side by Faysal al-Husayni, Zuhayrah Kamal, Mahir al-Masri, Haydar 'Abd al-Shafi, lawyer Frij Abu-Maddin, and journalist Hani al-'Isawi.

During the meeting they discussed several political issues in the Middle East region, especially the peace march and the suffering of the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation.

The Palestinian side stressed attachment to Palestinian constants: the right to self-determination, establishment of an independent Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital under the leadership of the PLO.

PNC Speaker on Peace Conference, Other Issues

JN0509143891 *Amman AKHBAR AL-USBU'*
in Arabic 5 Sep 91 p 7

[Interview with PNC Speaker Shaykh 'Abd-al-Hamid al-Sa'ih; place and date not given]

[Text] [AKHBAR AL-USBU'] When will the Palestine National Council [PNC] convene its next session and what are the most prominent developments it will discuss?

[Al-Sa'ih] The PNC will hold its new session in Algiers in the second half of September to discuss the proposed peaceful solutions, the Arab stands on them, and the Palestinian position. It will also discuss the conditions of the Palestinian people following the series of tragedies that have befallen them and ways of overcoming them.

The session will be restricted this time to PNC members because the Algerian Government requested that attendance be only for members and no guests or observers be invited to the PNC meetings. The PLO decided to respond to the Algerian request and to rationalize its expenditure by cancelling invitations to hundreds of observers and guests as it used to do. Protecting the large number of attendees requires Algeria to spend much for security. This is not available now in light of the economic situation Algeria is in.

[AKHBAR AL-USBU'] Since you are going to discuss the U.S. peace initiative, do you not believe that the PLO departed from the national constants embodied in its charter when it dropped the Arab territories that were occupied in 1947 from its calculations and when it recognized Resolutions 242 and 338? Will the PNC amend the Palestine national charter?

[Al-Sa'ih] No one can depart from our national charter and no one can dictate a decision to the council. The

PNC, according to the charter, is its own master and even Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat will not be able to dictate what he wants to the PNC.

We have not ceded one inch of the land of Palestine, but there is a difference between accepting something that is less than your aspirations and making concessions. Giving up our charter is absolutely out of question, and our objective is to liberate all of Palestine with all means possible, whether by peace or war. No one has considered amending the Palestine national charter, but if the council decides to do so, it is the only one that has such a right. I confidently say to you that no one is thinking of this issue. The PLO presented questions to the U.S. Administration and so far we have not received any American reply to them in order to decide our position toward the peace conference. I can affirm that if the PLO succeeds in setting up a Palestinian state that includes the West Bank and Gaza, with Jerusalem as its capital, without making concessions, then we approve of this.

[AKHBAR AL-USBU'] Then you have not yet decided to participate in the peace conference. From this premise, what are the Palestinian constants?

[Al-Sa'ih] We are still waiting for the U.S. reply to our questions. We will decide whether to participate or not on the basis of this reply. However, our principles have not changed. We still insist on the convocation of an international conference with full prerogatives, to be attended by the permanent members of the Security Council. This conference should be effective and capable of ending the conflict and solving the question in a comprehensive and just manner so that we may devote ourselves to the building of our state.

[AKHBAR AL-USBU'] What are the Palestinian questions?

[Al-Sa'ih] I cannot disclose them, but they are not outside the Palestine national charter and are in the interest of the Palestinian people and the Palestine question.

[AKHBAR AL-USBU'] What about Jerusalem?

[Al-Sa'ih] If Israel and the United States refuse to discuss the Jerusalem issue, we will not accept that because Jerusalem is our capital and we will not relinquish it at all.

[AKHBAR AL-USBU'] Reports mention that you intend to resign from the PNC presidency?

[Al-Sa'ih] That is untrue. I decided not to nominate myself to the presidency for the next session of the PNC, but I will run the council session in my capacity as oldest member. A new independent speaker will be elected and I will step down from the presidency during the forthcoming session. I have chosen to leave the presidency to younger people who are able to work in these difficult circumstances.

[AKHBAR AL-USBU'] What about Hamas and its demand to participate in the PNC session?

[Al-Sa'ih] To begin with, I appreciate the militant stand of the Hamas movement, but I believe that they have to enter

into the council and struggle from within to realize their other demands, whether regarding the percentage of representation or political stance because "very faction or group has a certain number of seats that had been agreed on, and to change this balance is very difficult. The selection of the representatives of factions and groups is done through indirect election since every faction or group chooses its representatives from its members. The Palestinians in the diaspora, such as those in Brazil, meet and choose whom they want to represent them. Therefore, the principle of election is there and is a basic condition, but we cannot implement it in the Arab countries in the manner that the Hamas movement wants in view of sensitivities that we want to avoid. I am the PNC speaker and I hold a Jordanian passport. There is no interest at this stage in inciting Arab governments against us. How can we distinguish between the Palestinian and the non-Palestinian in Jordan? The Jordanian Government and any other Arab government will reject citizens holding its passports choosing representatives for the Palestinians.

[AKHBAR AL-USBU'] What about Hamas' claim that the PLO contradicted its national charter?

[Al-Sa'ih] We cling to our national charter. No one can bypass it. Our goal will continue to be the liberation of Palestine. However, I have an official letter from the Hamas movement which says: If the PLO succeeds in setting up the state of Palestine with Jerusalem as its capital in the West Bank and Gaza Strip without having to concede anything else, then we approve and agree to the national charter.

I say that we have not conceded "anything else."

[AKHBAR AL-USBU'] What has the PLO offered the Palestinians who came from Kuwait?

[Al-Sa'ih] The PLO provided the Palestinians in Kuwait with more than \$4.5 million from the Palestinian National Fund during their stay in Kuwait while the crisis was on. We also donated many million dollars more to be spent on more than 5000 students studying in Arab and international universities whose financial resources from their families in Kuwait stopped during the crisis. Financial aid was also given to hundreds of Palestinian families in Jordan who lost all their savings in Kuwait.

Lately, the PLO asked all those who have scientific certificates to register their names at the Palestinian embassy offices in Amman in preparation for appointing whoever can be appointed in the Arab countries. Algeria and Libya have so far agreed to appoint a large number of science diploma holders who have come from Kuwait and who applied at the Palestinian embassy. Extensive contacts are taking place with the concerned sides in the two countries to actually start appointing those who meet the conditions. Contacts are also continuing with other Arab countries to absorb the unemployed among the Palestinians coming from Kuwait.

[AKHBAR AL-USBU'] Are you satisfied with the level of Jordanian-Palestinian coordination?

[Al-Sa'ih] Yes, very satisfied indeed, because Jordan feels a special sense of responsibility toward the Palestine question. So the results in solving this question will affect the Jordanian and Palestinian people alike.

The success of coordination lies in that either side, Palestinian or Jordanian, does not take a unilateral stand. This is what is currently happening, which is why coordination between Jordan and the PLO is successful.

[AKHBAR AL-USBU'] What about coordination between the Jordanian and Palestinian parliamentarians?

[Al-Sa'ih] First, the Jordanian parliament is an independent parliament, and so is the PNC. However, we are always in contact with each other during international parliamentary conferences to coordinate our stands regarding the proposed issues.

[AKHBAR AL-USBU'] What about setting up a joint parliamentary operations' room which includes the members of the two parliaments, the Jordanian parliament and the PNC?

[Al-Sa'ih] We have not discussed this subject and no one has actually proposed it.

Official on Implications of Israeli 'War Budget'

NC0509113791 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0845 GMT
5 Sep 91

[Text] Tunis, 5 Sep (MENA)—Khalid al-Hasan, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Palestine National Council [PNC], has termed the new Israeli defense budget a "war budget," and said its increase cannot be interpreted to reflect "peaceful intentions".

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi requested an additional \$400 million for the Defense Ministry's budget, but the Israeli Knesset only approved \$200 million. The Defense Ministry will thus receive 16 percent of the total Israeli Government budget.

Al-Hasan told MENA that 16 percent of the Israeli budget had been earmarked for immigrant services. Considering that the settlement policy is part of a military strategy, in practice this raises the defense budget's share to 32 percent of the total budget.

Al-Hasan asked: Will Israel use this "war budget" in a new expansionist war to solve the water shortage problem by force, achieve further expansion, and create a new situation on the ground which could divert attention from the territories occupied during the June 1967 war and demolish the peace process, while taking advantage of the upcoming U.S. elections and seeking assistance from the powerful Zionist lobby? Or will this war budget be used as bargaining chip at the negotiating table?

Al-Hasan stressed that, in either case, the new Israeli budget reflects a serious attempt of the Israeli leadership to stall the peace process or the peace conference.

Turkoman Leader Says Karkuk Besieged

NC0609092691 Istanbul GUNAYDIN in Turkish
2 Sep 91 p 8

[Zubeyir Kindira report: "Saddam Husayn Has Besieged Karkuk"]

[Text] Ankara—Iraq has only recently begun to recover from the effects of the Gulf war, but it has already launched an attack on Bubiyan Island and is now besieging the Turkoman people in Karkuk.

The attempted coup in the Soviet Union and its aftermath, the unrest in the Balkans, and the Baltic republics' declarations of independence are currently preoccupying world attention. This situation has allowed Saddam Husayn to intensify his oppression of the Turkoman and Kurdish peoples to bring about their forced assimilation. In the last two weeks, Saddam Husayn has resettled 2,726 Arabs in Karkuk, a city largely inhabited by Turkomans. Meanwhile, the Kurdish leaders who have been holding talks with the Baghdad regime are reported to have lost all hope of reaching an agreement, as a result of the irreconcilable approach maintained by the Iraqi Government.

Muzaffer Aslan, secretary general of the National Turkoman Party of Iraq, told GUNAYDIN: "The Turkoman people are in a very difficult position because of the oppressive measures taken against them in recent days."

He added: "The plight of the Turkoman people is terrible. They have had to endure the clashes with the Kurds and Saddam Husayn's oppression. Thousands of Iraqi citizens died as a result of the Kurds' efforts to occupy Karkuk. The Turkomans were bombed first by the Kurds and then by the Iraqi Armed Forces. They suffered losses in lives and property. The city was destroyed. Saddam Husayn is now trying to enact legislation to Arabize the Turkoman people. The government declared the castle in Karkuk a historic site and evicted the hundreds of Turkomans living in it. Thousands of Arabs are being resettled in Karkuk, with more than 2,726 arriving in just the last two weeks. Saddam Husayn wants to make the Turkomans a minority in this area. Meanwhile, the regime is forcing the Turkomans to register themselves as being of Arab extraction."

Aslan also claimed that Saddam Husayn's military forces are besieging Karkuk. Regarding the Kurds, he said: "In view of its weak position, the Saddam regime has used delaying tactics for the last five or six months to avoid holding talks with the Kurds. Once it felt it had regained some of its strength, it reimposed the earlier dictatorship. I have held talks with representatives of Jalal Talabani and Mas'ud Barzani, and it seems they have lost all hope of reaching an agreement."

Turkey's Policy

Aslan noted that the Turkoman people are adversely affected by even the slightest hint of weakness in Turkey's position. He said: "Even the election campaign in Turkey gives Saddam Husayn the opportunity to intensify his pressure on the Turkoman people. The Turkomans are now becoming active everywhere on the international scene, but Turkey's policy toward them remains unclear."

Regime Attacks on Marshlands, Villages Reported

NC0509152991 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious
Iraq in Arabic 1415 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] In an attempt to escalate the crazy Saddamist malice against the sons of our revolutionary people and as a result of the growing popular wrath against the criminal regime, Saddam's cowardly troops have attacked residential areas inhabited by unarmed people. The following is an account of these attacks:

1. On 10 August 1991, a regiment of the criminal Saddamist enemy raided the al-Hamar village in [name indistinct]. A confrontation ensued between the troops and the village inhabitants. The enemy troops were forced to flee when the regiment commander's car was destroyed and a number of soldiers were injured.
2. On 19 August 1991, two helicopters belonging to the 'Aflaqist enemy attacked the marshlands adjacent to the railway line. The attack was carried out one day following an operation by our heroic mujahidin, in which the agents of the criminal regime traveling on a train in the area were attacked. We have no details on the outcome of that operation.
3. On 20 August 1991, two helicopters dropped thermal balloons on marshlands and villages in al-Nasiriyah, particularly those in al-Rumaylah. A number of innocent citizens were either killed or wounded.
4. On 22 August 1991—during an attempt to provide air cover for withdrawing Saddamist troops from (al-Dayr) and surrounding areas and deploying these troops along the railway line near the (al-Dayr) area—two helicopters hovered over the area and opened fire with machine guns.
5. On 23 August, the 10th Brigade, supported by air cover, attacked the marshlands and arrested a number of people. Some were released the next day.
6. On 26 August, [words indistinct] brigade sent a number of helicopters to the southern area. A number of the citizens were killed and others were arrested.

Conditions for Improved Iraqi-U.S. Ties Viewed

JN0609112591 Baghdad RABIL in Arabic
4 Sep 91 p 1

[Article by Salah al-Mukhtar: "Who Created the Gulf Crisis? Iraq or the United States?"—all quotation marks as published]

[Excerpts] Before the eruption of the second Gulf war some people "thought" that the United States had intervened in the crisis on the basis of crystal-clear facts that emphasized that international legitimacy had been violated by the occupation of Kuwait. Consequently, and according to this belief, the U.S. position toward Iraq "was a reaction to a provocative and dangerous Iraqi action."

This "belief" has been refuted by the facts that were exposed by the war and its aftermath. They proved that the United States, and not Iraq, had planned to trigger the Gulf crisis, and was the one to insist on not solving it peacefully, pushing the crisis into an all-out war whose aim was to destroy Iraq's infrastructure as a prelude to liquidating its political-social system. [passage omitted]

After the eruption of the crisis, everybody realized that the United States did not want a peaceful solution, but wanted either an all-out war against Iraq, or a humiliating and unconditional surrender. It became obvious that what the American officials had been saying in a mild voice directly or indirectly before the war and the crisis had been submitted as official U.S. conditions, including the destruction of Iraqi weapons and infrastructure, and elimination of its political-economic independence. Hence, it is no longer a secret or an ambiguous question that the United States had quietly planned for the destruction of Iraq materially and morally, and for the fabrication of "reasons" and pretexts to achieve this goal.

Now the question one can seriously and urgently ask oneself is the following: After all the United States has done to Iraq and the region within the framework of its set plan, does anyone expect a readiness on the part of the United States to improve relations with Iraq? There are two answers to this dangerous question: No, or a conditional yes. No, because the United States does not act according to fleeting sentiments and whims; it moves in accordance with preset plans. Its failure to achieve the goal of destroying the Iraqi political structure, which had been the most important objective of its war against Iraq, meant that it had reached half way and stopped there. After the goals of the plan were revealed and after the destruction of several Iraqi infrastructure facilities, objective facts emerged that forced the United States to cease fire without having realized the most important objective; namely, wiping out the Iraqi leadership, and especially getting rid of the revolution's leader, President Saddam Husayn.

In view of these concrete facts, the United States resorted to "the strategy of gradually biting off Iraq's sources of power," rather than a military war in order to realize this objective. Therefore, under these circumstances, one has to keep in mind that the U.S. war against Iraq has not stopped. However, its shape has changed. This indicates that the possibility of serious and sincere dialogue on the part of the United States has not materialized and is not expected to materialize in the near future in light of the current circumstances. But due to the psychological

makeup of the United States and its decisionmakers, the answer may also be "a conditional yes."

Theoretically, a serious dialogue between Iraq and the United States could be conducted in the distant future. This can be realized on condition that Iraq continues its current great achievements, topmost of which is preserving its national unity, continuing construction, and developing and creating national sources of basic commodities and materials. This will become easier if international developments take place that are not to the liking of the United States.

The United States cannot ignore the solid and unchangeable facts. One of these facts that will compel the United States to reconsider its anti-Iraq position is the realization of more successes in the area of neutralizing the results of the siege and resolving the problems. This is exactly what is actually taking place, and so effectively that it has made Iraq more respected abroad. Therefore, the first step to "force" the United States to reconsider its position is to faithfully observe public order, to fill any gap through which the enemy can penetrate to undermine our national unity, to support the political structures without compromise or hesitation, and to firmly distinguish between the basic necessities of life and consumption and nonessential requirements.

Anything else will be a misunderstanding of U.S. intentions and psychology because the United States understands abstract flexibility as nothing more than a sign of the foe's imminent collapse. It understands flexibility when it is based on solid material facts that prevent retreat.

UN Report on Kuwaiti Claims 'Appropriate Slap'

JN0509160091 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1450 GMT
5 Sep 91

[Text] Baghdad, 5 Sep (INA)—Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, minister of state for foreign affairs, has asserted that the UN secretary general's report on the alleged Iraqi infiltration into Bubiyan Island has laid bare the cheap allegations propagated by the rulers of Kuwait.

Commenting on the UN secretary general's report concerning the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observers Mission [UNIKOM], which was communicated to the Security Council on 3 September, Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, minister of state for foreign affairs, told INA that Paragraphs 13 and 14 of the UN secretary general's report detail the results of the UNIKOM investigation into the claims and lies of the Kuwaiti rulers regarding the alleged Iraqi infiltration into Bubiyan Island.

In his report, the UN secretary general has asserted that the international observers mission has not found any evidence to substantiate the allegations of the Kuwaiti rulers that Iraqis infiltrated into Bubiyan Island. The international observers, moreover, have not received

any information citing any earlier reports on the allegations of the rulers of Kuwait that some Iraqis were hiding in Bubiyan.

The minister added that the UN secretary general's report included an item that exposes the cheap claims propagated by the rulers of Kuwait. The UN secretary general has asserted that the international observers team has not found or seen any evidence to prove the existence of weapons aboard the Iraqi fishermen's boats. He added that the suspect rulers of Kuwait have tried through their campaign of lies, malice, and machinations against Iraq and the Arab nation to portray the fishing boats as Iraqi warships. However, the report of the international observers team has delivered an appropriate slap to them.

Muhammad Sa'id al-Sabbah asserted that the rulers of Kuwait have not refrained from using all sorts of lies, deception, and treachery to conspire against Iraq and the Arab nation. They were also driven by their black malice and subservience to foreigners to fabricate a mock incident to be picked up immediately by the U.S.-Western-Zionist propaganda machine and its agents in the region to continue the unjust campaign against Iraq, as part of the aggressive foreign scheme to mobilize others against Iraq and to make up pretexts to continue to impose the unjust economic blockade on the unyielding, steadfast people of Iraq.

Commenting on the stands of some Western governments, which hastened to adopt the lies of the rulers of Kuwait, the minister of state for foreign affairs said: Although we did not find these stands strange, because they were preplanned and internationally exposed, we have to say that the way in which these governments quickly picked up the lies of the rulers of Kuwait and tried to portray them as a real incident and launched threats against Iraq, has given new conclusive evidence of the unjust policies pursued by these governments in their dealings with Iraq.

The minister of state for foreign affairs concluded: Exposing the lies of the suspect rulers of Kuwait and their masters, the foreigners, is new evidence that lies have short wings, whatever the cover used by liars and the brute force they are resting on. He added that the new scandal for the rulers of Kuwait has shed light on the malicious intentions and objectives they are seeking; namely, to perpetuate and nurture the suspect campaign against steadfast Iraq and its patient people, in order to continue to impose the unjust economic blockade on it.

Talabani Comments on Clashes, Iraq, Turkey

NC0409201701 Istanbul CUMHURİYET in Turkish
2 Sep 91 p 10

[“Exclusive” interview with Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, by correspondent Vedat Yenerer in Shaqlawah, Iraq; date not given]

[Text] Shaqlawah—[Yenerer] The Iraqi forces are clashing with the Kurdish Front groups in various areas in Karkuk and Irbil. Considering the peace talks you are holding with the Baghdad administration, how do you assess these clashes?

[Talabani] Regardless of the promises it made to the Kurdish Front during the negotiations, the Iraqi officials have been provoking violence. The Baghdad officials have launched a campaign to “Arabize” Irbil and Karkuk. Hashim Hasan al-Majid, who is Saddam Husayn's relative, is currently constructing housing facilities on 2,600 plots of land for the Arab families he plans to transfer to these areas from Baghdad and other cities. He plans to Arabize these areas by having 2,600 Arab families settle in them. In general, the families of military personnel and retired civil servants will be transferred to these areas. The Iraqi officials informed us in the past, however, that they will remove the Arabs who had settled in Kurdish homes and either joined us or immigrated from the two regions. What they are doing now is the opposite.

But, this is not all. They have added another 700 tanks to the 150 they already had in the region. The number of Iraqi tanks has probably reached 1,000 by now. These tanks indicate that the Iraqi officials plan to attack the Kurds instead of maintaining a defensive position. These tanks are within the territory of Kurdistan, which will be declared an autonomous region. They constitute a significant threat. The presence of the tanks may cause a new uprising in Karkuk and Irbil. The Kurds will not agree to the presence of armed Iraqi troops on their own territory. Clashes are breaking out between the Arabs and the Kurds in the cities at present. The police are maintaining an approach favoring the Arabs. In the event of an uprising, the Kurdish Front will move with its arms to side with the Kurdish people.

[Yenerer] How do you assess the cross-border operations by the Turkish Armed Forces?

[Talabani] They do not contribute toward our relations with Turkey. Turkey has a “friendly” image in Kurdistan. The military operations may harm this image. We have discussed all this with the Turkish officials. I believe they will halt these operations.

[Yenerer] Can you explain your opinion on the dialogue you have with the Workers Party of Kurdistan [PKK]?

[Talabani] The Kurdish Front will not allow the other Kurdish groups to base themselves in Iraq to attack neighboring countries. Our people have been bombed and forced to emigrate because of these groups. I believe this matter also concerns the Iraqi Government. I also believe we shall resolve this matter together with the Baghdad administration. We are a nation which receives foreign aid at present. The attacks are forcing the countries which provide aid to the Kurds to reconsider their approach. Consequently, the Kurds suffer from this situation. We have friends in the PKK. We shall establish a dialogue with them. We have never sought bases in

Iran and Turkey to attack Iraq. Why are the PKK members doing this against Turkey?

[Yenerer] What approach will you adopt if the PKK refuses to withdraw from northern Iraq? Will you attack that organization?

[Talabani] The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan will not get involved in an armed clash with the other Kurdish groups. The peasants who have returned to their homes in northern Iraq may take a stand against the PKK. They are the people who suffer most from the military operations. Why does the PKK not return to its former bases in Iran to wage its struggle from that country? If you ask me, I would say the PKK policy is similar to that which former Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit pursued in Turkey. Ecevit wished to strengthen Turkey's dialogue with Iraq. This meant he was willing to join forces with Saddam Husayn to crush the Kurds. The PKK is attacking Turkey at present. Consequently, it is placing us in a difficult position. The PKK's activities serve Iraq's policy. Saddam Husayn wishes to rectify Iraq's relations with Turkey at present. This will give him the opportunity to confront the Kurds.

[Text] [Yenerer] How do you assess Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz's statement that the "Turkish Government is opposed to the idea of Kurdish autonomy?"

[Talabani] I have not heard about Mesut Yilmaz's statement, so I cannot comment on it. But I believe that President Turgut Ozal's disclosure was very clear. He said Turkey may support a federation which would be established by the Kurds, the Turkomans, and the Arabs in Iraq. We maintain relations with Turkey through Turgut Ozal. I believe that Mesut Yilmaz should support Turgut Ozal's views. What is important for us is what Turgut Ozal says, not Mesut Yilmaz.

[Yenerer] Every time you hold talks in Turkey, you say there have been satisfactory developments and that the problems have been resolved. Have you not had a disagreement on any problem?

[Talabani] The journalists always wish to lure me into a trap. Of course, there have been negative developments as well, but I cannot disclose them to you. If I do, then I will create friction between the two nations. I represent the Kurdish Front and the Kurdish people in Iraq. Naturally, I have to make balanced disclosures. Kurdistan and Turkey have common interests as two neighbors. For example, we are opposed to new attacks by Iraq. Meanwhile, I wish to note that differing viewpoints exist between Ozal and Yilmaz as well. I would not say the Turkish Government, but I trust Ozal's sincere approach. You should ask him whether or not he is also sincere toward the Kurds in Turkey.

[Yenerer] The Turkish people know you as a Kurdish leader who is close to the Turkish Government. How do you assess this image?

[Talabani] I wish to leave this to the people who live in Turkey. The Kurds in Turkey are aware of our policy's objectives. We do not bargain on our principles. One of these principles calls for establishing good relations with all countries. We have been maintaining good relations since 1986 with the Iranian administration and the Democratic Party of Kurdistan in Iran, which is waging a struggle against the Iranian regime. Why should we not do so?

Turgut Ozal launched the first move toward the Kurds in Turkey. Regardless of how much the PKK tries to claim credit for this, it is common knowledge that the situation was not as much in favor of the Kurds prior to the Ozal era in Turkey as it is today.

[Yenerer] What would you have done if you were in Turkey?

[Talabani] I would have moved to give freedom to the press and promote human rights and freedoms. I would not have done this by launching an armed struggle against the PKK. I would have waged my struggle through political platforms, as in the case of the People's Toil Party, and in the parliament in Ankara. Had Turkey not lost Iraq in World War I, the situation probably would have been very different. Nevertheless, I wish I had the opportunity to be involved in politics in Turkey.

RCC Raises Military Salaries by 40 Percent

JN0509151291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1420 GMT
5 Sep 91

[Text] Baghdad, 5 Sep (INA)—Upon instructions from President Saddam Husayn, the Revolution Command Council [RCC] today decided to raise the salaries of all classes and grades of martyrs, invalids, military, and state employees.

The RCC decided to raise the monthly salaries of martyrs, judges, university lecturers, ministry under secretaries, governors, holders of special grades, directors general, holders of Phd degrees, doctors, and invalids of al-Qadisiyah battle and the Mother of Battles by 55 percent.

The RCC also decided to raise the salaries of all the military by 40 percent, and the salaries of state employees and interior security forces and intelligence department officers and members by 30 percent. Salaries of pensioners were raised by 20 percent for those who spent 25 years in service, and by 15 percent for those with lesser service.

RCC Decisions on Status of Returning POW's

JN0409154891 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio
First Program Network in Arabic 1400 GMT 4 Sep 91

[Text] The Revolution Command Council [RCC] has issued a decision calling for officers and other ranks of the Internal Security Forces returning from captivity in the glorious al-Qadisiyah battle of Saddam to be covered

by the provisions of RCC Decision No. 402 passed on 21 October, 1990. The following is the text of the decision:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate:

The RCC

Decision No. 299

Dated 16 Safar, 1412 Hegira, corresponding to 26 August 1991.

Decision: Based on the provisions of Paragraph A of Article 42 of the Constitution, the RCC has decided the following:

First—The officers and other ranks of the Internal Security Forces returning from captivity in the glorious al-Qadisiyah battle of Saddam shall be covered by the provisions of RCC Decision No. 402, dated 21 October 1990.

Second—The ministers concerned shall implement this decision. [Signed] Saddam Husayn, RCC chairman.

On 21 October 1990, the RCC passed a resolution whereby volunteer officers and ranks returning from captivity were given the choice of either civilian appointments or retirement.

The following is the text of the decision:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate:

The RCC

Decision No. 402

Dated 3 Rabi' Thani, 1411 Hegira, corresponding to 21 October 1990.

Decision: Based on the provisions of Paragraph A of Article 42 of the Constitution, the RCC has decided the following:

First—Volunteer officers and other ranks returning from captivity are given the choice of civilian appointments or retirement.

Second—For civilian appointments or transfer to other appointments, allowances will be made for the state of health and [word indistinct] covered by the provisions of paragraph one of this resolution. The provisions of this decision shall apply to all citizens engaged in the war effort who have returned from captivity.

Third—The ministers responsible shall implement this decision. [Signed] Saddam Husayn, RCC chairman.

Kurdish Leader Views Accord With Government

JN0409150691 Baghdad BABIL in Arabic 2 Sep 91
P 1

[By Rashid al-Rimahi]

[Text] BABIL has learned that the delegation of Kurdish parties has reached some positive results in talks with Baghdad and will soon announce the results of the agreement they reached. The Kurdish delegation held a series of meetings in the autonomous region to study the results. The people of Irbil participated in discussing the agreement. Dr. Makram Talabani, a well-known progressive Kurdish figure and former minister of irrigation, declared that the agreement includes normalizing the situation in Kurdistan. In accordance with this Kurdish farmers will be able to return to their regions and will be compensated for the losses they incurred.

Dr. Talabani, speaking with BABIL, said discussions with the Kurdish delegation have come a long way and agreement has been reached on basic issues whose objective was national unity and realization of democracy, foremost of which is normalizing the situation in Kurdistan. The government proposed a new formula that gained the interest and approval of the delegation. The objective of this agreement is to return all Kurds to their areas, regardless of whether these are inside the autonomous region or not.

Answering a question on the amendment that has been made to the law on autonomy, Dr. Talabani said this amendment effected all articles of the previous law, thus nearly turning it into a new law on autonomy.

Dr. Talabani said the most important point in the amendment gives the secretaries general in the region broad powers. They can now make decisions and implement them without referring to the responsible minister in the central government. Agreement has also been reached on normalizing the situation in Kurdistan. The objective is to return all farmers to their villages, rebuild those villages, and help them by compensating them for the losses they incurred.

He commented on the law pardoning all Iraqis, foremost of which are the Kurds who have done some things described as illegal. He said: This law was quite straightforward, but the specialized sides have asked for additional explanations since they do not know what its contents are, especially those parts dealing with political prisoners.

Concluding his interview with BABIL, Dr. Makram Talabani hoped that a cohesive national unit could be achieved, which would provide the Kurds with stability and guarantee their rights within the framework of the Republic of Iraq. He affirmed that normalizing the situation in Kurdistan will end any dispute and that autonomy is, in the first place, one of the requirements for democratic order in a multiethnic country.

Leaders Reject Linkage of Settlement, U.S. Aid

Shamir on Use of U.S. Funds

TA0609092291 Tel Aviv YEDIOT AHARONOT
in Hebrew 6 Sep 91 p A1

[Report by political correspondent Shim'on Schiffer, Rami Tal in Washington, and Tzadik Yisra'eli in New York]

[Excerpt] Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir has promised the U.S. Administration that the money Israel will borrow—and the United States will guarantee—will not be used in any way in the territories administered since 1967.

This was included in a letter signed by Yitzhak Shamir which accompanies the request to be presented this afternoon by Israeli Ambassador Zalman Shoval to Secretary of State James Baker.

In his letter, the prime minister also says that Israel hopes to settle the guarantees issue "as soon as possible," because the absorption problems of the Soviet immigrants must be dealt with immediately.

The document also deals with the way Israel is coping with the problem of inflation and outlines measures already taken and others still to be adopted to lower inflation in Israel.

"Within the foreseeable future, we will not receive anything from the Bush administration without giving something in return, which will be expressed in compromises and concessions linked to the political process," Shamir's bureau said last night.

Nevertheless, the prime minister included in his remarks yesterday an implied threat in responding to the linkage the administration has formed between the granting of guarantees and the political process. Mr. Shamir said that "our friends in the United States know that with us, cooperation and understanding work better than any other approach."

In a report which reached Jerusalem from its embassy in Washington, Yoram Ettinger, who is responsible for relations with Congress, wrote that there is a long list of senators who support the Israeli request for guarantees. Ettinger included a copy of a letter from New York Democratic Senator Daniel Moynihan, who announced that he will try to get the guarantees for Israel.

The report stressed that the support in Congress for granting Israel the guarantees crosses party lines and includes key figures in the Republican Party who do not agree with the administration's linkage between the guarantees and the political process or with the idea of postponing the debate. [passage omitted]

Levi—No Concessions on Security

TA0609074391 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
0600 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Excerpt] Foreign Minister David Levi has said that if, God forbid, we are told that the granting of the loan guarantee will hinge on conditions that jeopardize our security, we will not give in. Meanwhile, Defense Minister Moshe Arens has said that he cannot imagine that anybody in the U.S. Administration will want to punish the immigrants coming from the Soviet Union. Both ministers were addressing separate gatherings of Likud members in Tel Aviv. Our party affairs correspondent Yaron Deqel reports:

[Begin recording] [Deqel] In the Likud, it was business as usual. Notwithstanding the truce between their rival camps, Moshe Arens and David Levi could not toast the Jewish New Year together and each one held a separate gathering with friends in different places in Tel Aviv. Nevertheless, both ministers addressed current issues, such as Israel's request for loan guarantees for immigrant absorption. Foreign Minister Levi vowed that even if pressured, the government will not give in.

[Levi] If, God forbid, we are told that the aid hinges on our capitulation and our acceptance of conditions that jeopardize our security, I will say: We will survive on bread and water; we will resist with all our strength and faith; we will not give in.

[Deqel] The foreign minister called on his colleagues to abstain from exacerbating relations with our greatest friend.

[Levi] I know all about the urge to be seen as a hero and a patriot and to throw clichés around. As a man who knows how these things work, my question is: What lies behind those clichés? Will they solve this serious problem?

[Deqel] Levi added: Let those who want to make threats play macho at home, rather than speak in the name of the Israeli Government.

On the other hand, Defense Minister Moshe Arens said he cannot imagine that the administration will drag its feet on the debate about Israel's request for loan guarantees.

[Arens] I cannot imagine that anybody in the U.S. Administration will want to punish the immigrants coming to Israel from the Soviet Union because of political disagreements with the Israeli Government.

[Deqel] Can you not imagine the administration putting off a debate until after the regional conference—which at the moment is scheduled to convene in October—actually meets?

[Arens] I do not think so. The debate must be held by the U.S. Congress and I have no doubt that the latter will proceed to discuss our request at once.

[Deqel] Statements on domestic politics also featured in the gatherings. Minister Arens said the Knesset elections may be moved up, but added that he does not believe they will be held too early. We asked him when:

[Arens] In Israel one can never tell, and they could be held earlier. Seeing that I was addressing Likud activists, I said that we should also be ready for the eventuality that elections be held earlier.

[Deqel] From a purely political point of view, when will it be convenient for the Likud to hold the elections?

[Arens] I think it will be convenient any time it is convenient for the country. In my opinion, it is best to hold them on schedule. We are a small country, and for a country that is short on resources, I think once every four years is enough. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Arens Sees No Connection

TA0509161691 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1500 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] Defense Minister Moshe Arens claims that the U.S. Administration understands that there is no connection between the request for loan guarantees for immigrant absorption and progress in the peace process. The defense minister believes that in the wake of the cabinet's approval of the defense budget not all the planned defense projects will be implemented. Our army affairs correspondent Gid'on Baum reports:

Defense Minister Moshe Arens said that it is clear that the U.S. loan guarantees for immigrant absorption are important and urgent, and Israel cannot put off the request. He said it was inconceivable that anybody might link the granting of guarantees to a settlement freeze. Minister Arens said Secretary of State Baker will not raise the issue in his upcoming visit.

[Begin Arens recording] I have no doubt that the U.S. Administration and the American people understand that the immigrants are coming, that they have to be assisted, and that there is no logic or justice in trying to link that with the progress the Arabs will permit in the peace process. [end recording]

On defense issues, the minister said that it is now clear that Israel is facing threats to its home front from long-range missiles. Not all the planned projects will be implemented in the coming year because the entire supplementary defense budget was not approved by the cabinet.

[Begin Arens recording] It is clear that we will not be able to do everything we had planned. On the other hand, a significant part of our demands were met; therefore, there is much difficult and urgent work still facing us. [end recording]

The defense minister, his deputy, and the director general wished the Defense Ministry employees a happy new year.

Meridor—Linkage 'Grave Mistake'

TA0509185291 Tel Aviv Educational Television
Network in Hebrew 1500 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Interview with Justice Minister Dan Meridor by Rafi Reshef in the Jerusalem studio—live]

[Excerpt] [Reshef] Good evening, Minister Dan Meridor.

[Meridor] Good evening.

[Reshef] We have many reports here that I would be glad if you could clarify for us: Has Washington linked granting us the requested guarantees with stopping settlement?

[Meridor] I hope not. There is no justification for this linkage. We made it clear to Washington that we will present our request for guarantees. It is and always has been clear that there are differences between us and the United States on various issues that relate to the negotiations: Jerusalem, settlements, the Palestinian issue, the border question. We have always seen to it that no link be made between economic aid for Israel, the issue of aliyah, and the political process.

[Reshef] Was there a request by the secretary of state to postpone the presentation of the guarantees request?

[Meridor] Talks were held between Jerusalem and Washington, but I would not like to go into details. We made our position clear to the United States.

[Reshef] We will soon deal with our position, but I would like to ask you: Do you fear U.S. pressure, delay, almost unnatural delay in the Congress procedures because of Israel's nay-saying on this issue?

[Meridor] There is no Israeli nay-saying. This is our position not because we insist that it be like that or because we are stubborn. It should be realized that once negotiations start, and I hope they will, it will be no picnic. The negotiations will be tough because the gaps between us—all the Israelis, including the other side of the political spectrum—and the Arabs are very wide. It would be a mistake to believe that such negotiations could start with a sword hanging over our heads. I also believe that the Americans will consider the fact that we came this far, to the verge of negotiations, for a single reason: We both knew that such sensitive issues in dispute must not be raised before negotiations start. If they are raised now, thus causing a serious conflict, a fight on the issue of immigrant absorption and its link to the issue of settlement, I believe it would make it very difficult for us to make a very important move—one we are about to make—which follows great American investment over the past several months.

[Reshef] I believe this is clear: It is clear to you that settlement must not be stopped. My question is why could Menahem Begin, during the Camp David negotiations, stop settlement for six months, and even get the approval of Ari'el Sharon?

[Meridor] This was not done for six months, but only three; this was not before negotiations, but after them, after Camp David, during the talks there, at the opening of a different kind of talks with the Egyptians. I would not suggest linking the two issues.

[Reshef] With your permission, sir, I believe that you are saying that it is just this linkage that should not be made. All right, it followed negotiations, and they dealt with Egypt. Nevertheless, Menahem Begin agreed to this linkage.

[Meridor] I do not believe that the two instances can be compared because of this simple reason: We are talking about aid Israel is requesting not for settlements or for Israel's borders, but for aliyah from the USSR. For years we have struggled, and the United States helped us tremendously; we called: Let my people go, and succeeded—and the people are leaving and coming here. What is the logic of punishing these immigrants just because Israel and the United States do not agree on the settlement issue?

[Reshef] Mr. Meridor, at one time Finance Minister Moda'i spoke of a contingency plan. Are we prepared for the possibility that the United States, after all, will deny us the guarantees?

[Meridor] I do not suggest that we hold a theoretical discussion about some hypothesis. I sincerely hope that the Americans continue walking the line they have so far. We told them as much. The line is that we want to start negotiations now. There will be conflicts and difficulties, and I really want to advance. We will be smart; we will be stubborn where we should and flexible when we can. At the same time, and this is an altogether different track, we are raising the flag of aliyah and settlement, not only peace and security. Aliyah is one thing, settlement is another, and the political process is yet another. Aliyah is important for us, it is a matter of existence for us. The aid for that is accepted by the U.S. Administration, Congress, and the public. I believe linking the issue of aliyah with the political process will be a grave mistake.

[Reshef] Are we ready for the possibility that the Americans will make this great mistake?

[Meridor] I hope they will not. I do not want to threaten the Americans. We should not resort to expressions such as, we can live without them. We have very special relations with the United States, and I really hope that this linkage of aliyah and the political process, which really have nothing in common, will not be made. [passage omitted]

U.S. Stance 'Bordering on Racism'

TA0609053191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
0500 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] A senior political source in Jerusalem has said that the U.S. Administration is trying to exert pressure in any way it can to wring concessions out of Israel and to force it to toe the line of the U.S. dictates. The source

told our political correspondent Arye Golan that the current administration in Washington is characterized by a cold, businesslike approach based on self-interest.

The senior source in Jerusalem pointed out that Israel first applied for the guarantees to finance immigrant absorption as far back as during the Gulf war. Nevertheless, it complied with the U.S. request to postpone the presentation of the request, although at that time Israel enjoyed a tremendous amount of sympathy and its request would have been approved hands down. The source described the demand to stop settlement as bordering on racism.

Foreign Ministry Consultations

TA0509162091 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1500 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Report by political correspondent Natan Gutman]

[Text] The Foreign Ministry today held consultations prior to tomorrow's presentation to the U.S. Administration of the request for loan guarantees. The outcome of the consultations will be outlined in the instructions to be transmitted tomorrow to Ambassador Zalman Shoval before he meets Secretary of State Baker. The Israeli Embassy in Washington did not find it easy to arrange the meeting, apparently due to the administration's attempts to postpone the discussions on the guarantees. Jerusalem reiterated today that the decision not to accede to Baker's demand to put off the request for loan guarantees was justified. The guarantees are vital to Israel's economy; therefore, we cannot dither, political sources in Jerusalem said. The evaluation here is that the U.S. request to postpone the discussion on the guarantees was due to pressure by the Arab states and concern that Israel might request a postponement of the peace conference because the memorandum of understanding does not suffice.

Deputy Minister Ge'ula Kohen said today that if Baker plans to come here to exert pressure to stop settlement, then it would be preferable for him to stay home. A nationalist government that agrees to stop settlement for even 24 hours will not be able to remain in power for even a single additional day.

Foreign Minister David Levi met today in his office with Egyptian Ambassador Muhammad Basyuni, who is leaving for Cairo and wished to make it clear that all the agreements reached with Israel on expanding cooperation between the two countries are still valid. Basyuni said that an Egyptian commercial delegation would arrive in Israel soon and an Israeli delegation would then be invited to Egypt. In response to Minister Levi's protests about meetings between Egyptian leaders with PLO officials, Basyuni responded that President Mubarak avoided meeting the PLO in order to encourage the Palestinian population to act on its own for its future.

Comment on Possible U.S. Conditions

TA0509165091 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
5 Sep 91 p B1

[Commentary by 'Aqiva Eldar: "Guarantee for the Continuation of the Occupation"]

[Text] The injection of \$2 billion into this year's budget could substitute bitter pills such as taxation of old age pensions, chronic unemployment, and/or the postponement of the Army's procurement of weapons to intercept missiles en route to Tel Aviv. A low-interest loan of \$10 billion over five years is not just economic, social, and security good news to a country facing the hardship of absorbing hundreds of thousands of new citizens. A U.S. decision to grant Israel guarantees for such a vast loan, which will probably be coupled with generous aid from Germany (Chancellor Kohl agreed "to close ranks" with President Bush), may not only affect Israel's political future but even that of the Middle East.

Any intelligent person will tell you that countries, including friendly superpowers, do not hand out free lunches. Israelis have known for years that the United States paid in hard currency for the strategic and democratic assets its staunchest ally in the region offered it. The military alignment during the Gulf war and the collapse of the Soviet empire have eroded Israel's strategic worth as a warhead in the struggle against Arab extremism and communism. In an era of massive national liberations, the creeping annexation policy (which ignores the right of a neighboring people to self-determination) gives rise to doubt about Israel's unique democratic nature.

When Bush decided to summon a peace conference in October, Yitzhak Shamir realized that participation in the conference would be the last coin in his pocket to pay for the \$10 billion in loan guarantees. Betting on that last coin is not too risky for him, owing to the fact that even if the Palestinians free themselves of the conditions imposed by Israel (on procedural matters and the Palestinian representation), he has not even been asked to give up his unique interpretation of UN Resolution 242. Moreover, the timetable of the peace process and the approval of the guarantees may enable the Likud to call an early election with one pocket full of cash and another pocket full of settlements. The message to the Israeli voter will be very clear: Only the Likud can lavish both dollars and settlements upon you, without committing itself to ceding even one inch of land.

Granting the guarantees with no political strings (such as the cessation of settlement) attached would deal a death blow to the main argument of the Labor Party and the Israeli left wing. The \$10 billion will not only prove that the right wing's policy does not affect the vital interests of Israel's citizens, but that Shamir's agreement to take part in the peace conference in the face of opposition from his extreme right-wing partners makes the U.S. Administration walk a very thin tightrope. Any careless move, such as hindering the guarantees, might make him

bolt the peace conference and run to a Likud convention that will elect him its leader in the early election. An election campaign venting rage at the United States coupled with the Labor Party's grave situation gives the right wing a good chance of spending at least four more years in power to rule both sides of the Green Line. During that time Ari'el Sharon will see to it that all that the peace conference can offer the Palestinians is self-determination in the airspace over the West Bank.

This dilemma bothers the U.S. Administration, which is seeking to turn the guarantees into a lever to stop settlement. George Shultz, the former secretary of state, would have ducked the dilemma by demanding economic reforms as a condition for the granting of the guarantees, as he did in 1985 when Israel applied for \$1.5 billion in emergency aid. But when Prof. Shultz talked economics, everybody knew that he meant economics, whereas if Baker tries to talk economics nobody will believe that he is not talking political science or the geography of Eretz Yisra'el.

This dilemma becomes more complicated on the way from the administration to Congress, which will be asked to approve the guarantees. Dani Halperin, who served as an economic attache for many years in the Israeli Embassy in Washington, tells about a talk he had once with Congressman Robert McCloskey, who proposed subtracting \$150 million from the annual aid to Israel to protest settlement. Experience shows, Halperin told him, that your proposal will be defeated by a large majority (because of the selfish electoral considerations of a large group of dominant congressmen), and the result will be counterproductive because people will say that Congress supports settlement. McCloskey dropped the idea.

The administration could be affected even more if its initiative to link the guarantees to settlement were foiled, since people would not only say that Congress is prepared to live with the creeping annexation, but also that it does not give a hoot about the President. Given those opening conditions the administration will have no choice other than to ask Congress to couple the approval of the guarantees with ample maneuvering room to enable it to lay a hand on the money tap it will be putting at Israel's disposal. For example, Congress may order the administration to sign the guarantees "based on the understanding that the settlement drive will not be accelerated." The administration may ask Congress to demand a periodic report on the scope of settlement and the progress made in the peace process. By approving one-fifth of the guarantees each year, the United States will not be giving up in one shot the rare opportunity of teaching the Israeli public a lesson in political education. A blank check would be tantamount to a guarantee to perpetrate the occupation.

U.S. To Meet Palestinians in East Jerusalem

TA0509195591 Jerusalem Israel Television Network
in Hebrew 1900 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] The U.S. Administration has made another gesture toward the Palestinians: Following the reports from

Washington concerning the treatment of the guarantees, the Americans promised that, to make a point, from now on they will hold meetings with Palestinian notables in East Jerusalem, not in the western part of the city as they have done so far.

Tomorrow in London, consultations between Faysal al-Husayni, his associates, and senior PLO officials will renew after the parties draft a document with 28 demands that have been presented to the U.S. Administration. Our Arab affairs correspondent Ehud Ya'ari reports that among others, the Palestinians presented the following demands: the release of all detainees; allowing the residents of the territories to take part in PLO discussions; the cancellation of the law banning the expression of support for the PLO; freedom of political activity; and the return of confiscated lands.

Sharon Promises Continuation of Settlement

TA0609084391 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST
in English 6 Sep 91 p 1

[Report by Bill Hutman]

[Text] Qarney Shomron—Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon promised yesterday that settlement activity in the territories would continue, but that no U.S. money would be used to build there.

Speaking also about the U.S.-initiated peace conference expected next month, Sharon said it would be "not a peace conference, but an international tribunal." The conference, if it comes off, has a greater chance of bringing "bloodshed and war" than peace, the minister said.

He was speaking before a rowdy crowd of several hundred at this Samaritan community, gathered for the inauguration of a new wing to a high-school yeshiva.

Some 400 teenagers, including 30 new immigrants, study at the yeshiva, living in mobile homes adjoining the campus.

Earlier in the evening, Sharon and senior ministry officials visited the nearby community of Qedumim, where 400 housing units are now under construction and an infrastructure exists for an additional 700 units. When construction is complete, the town's size will be more than doubled.

Sharon told reporters he would fight the recent budget cuts to ensure building in the territories would continue.

Sharon appeared very sensitive to the issue of loan guarantees, repeatedly telling reporters that U.S. funds were not going to Judaea, Samaria and Gaza, in accordance with U.S. demands.

"The money has nothing to do with construction in Judaea, Samaria and Gaza," he said. Rather, it is humanitarian aid for "Soviet Jews fleeing the dangers of the Soviet Union."

"Not one dollar of the loans we have asked for from the U.S. administration will be used in Judaea, Samaria and Gaza. The building you see here has nothing to do with the monies we are talking about."

He dismissed any linkage between the loan guarantees and settlement activity.

Officials in Sharon's entourage said that neither Sharon's visit nor speech was linked to Baker's coming visit and had been planned far in advance. Organizers, however, said they had known of Sharon's plans to attend the ceremony only since last week.

Levi Congratulates Soviet Foreign Minister

TA0509184391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1700 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi has congratulated his Soviet counterpart, Boris Pankin, on his appointment and expressed the hope that the ties between the two countries will continue to develop. In his letter, Minister Levi said that Israel followed closely the attempted coup in the USSR and that the victory of perestroika and glasnost and the achievements of Moscow's foreign policy are first and foremost the victory of the entire Soviet people.

Italian Foreign Minister Continues Visit

Talks With Leaders 'Very Positive'

AU0509102391 Rome ANSA in English
0841 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] (ANSA) Tel Aviv, September 4—The "great opportunity for peace" which has opened up in the Middle East as well as other parts of the world "looks closer and more solid day by day," Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis said here today as he also announced that Italy will work to ensure a majority in the United Nations General Assembly to repeal the UN resolution of some years ago equating Zionism to racism.

"It belongs to a time that is no longer," said De Michelis as he began a visit which analysts expect to start a new Mideast peace thrust after the recent weeks when the aftermath of the failed putsch in Moscow has grabbed the world limelight. "It was unacceptable yesterday, and it is even more so today."

De Michelis will be followed by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in a week's time. Speaking for one of the countries most active in seeking a Mideastern peace settlement and the convening of an international conference on the issue, the Italian diplomatic chief is meeting all the top Israeli leaders, from Foreign Minister David Levi and Premier Yitzhaq Shamir to President Hayim Herzog, Defense Minister Moshe Arens and Labor Party leader Shim'on Peres.

According to De Michelis, his opening sessions with Levi and Shamir were "very positive, very constructive, dominated by a great determination to speak frankly." Admitting that there are "questions to solve and details to finalise," he added that he believes an Arab-Israeli peace conference is now "possible and near."

But he also warned that if present openings are not consolidated in the next few weeks, the conference would become "a great failure." He also stressed the European Community's role in the parley, stressing that he believes the EC should be active in the negotiating process.

In his reading of the situation, he said the EC should help the talks by defining a "contribution in the perspective of integration, cooperation and security in the Mediterranean, the Near East and the Middle East in all directions, but especially as regards Israel."

Pointing to the "special" links between Israel and Europe, he argued that the Israeli authorities will necessarily take a risk by moving towards peace. "Peace will only be the start of a process, but many wounds will remain to cure, many mistrusts to overcome, many realities to change," he argued, also stressing that Europe must also keep a just solution for the Palestinians and their right to self-determination in the centre of the picture.

De Michelis's remarks confirmed forecasts from Italian Foreign Ministry sources that he would lay special stress on the idea of bringing Israel into moves for the creation of a common economic space between the European Community and the European Free Trade Association.

"If the peace process goes forward, we have the duty and the interest to offer Israel the possibility of a true economic integration with the Community," De Michelis said in a recent interview in which he said that only full Israeli confidence in the future through a firm mooring to Europe can give it the political premises for launching peace negotiations.

On Thursday afternoon De Michelis will give a lecture at the University of Tel Aviv entitled "A Peace Dividend; Security Through Integration. Europe and Israel in the 21st Century." De Michelis will also meet with a Palestinian delegation at the residence of the Italian consul general in Jerusalem before leaving tomorrow afternoon.

Holds News Conference

TA0609084591 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST
in English 6 Sep 91 p 3

[Report by Jacob Wirtschafter]

[Text] Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis ended his visit here yesterday with a call to Israeli leaders here to make a "cost-benefit analysis" of their current positions on settlements and the peace process.

The minister also told a news conference that Israel's prospects for closer relations with the European Community would resemble the model being formalized between the EC and European Free Trade Area nations such as Austria and Sweden.

"As a political democracy and a market economy, Israel fits the requirements for integration into the European economic space," de Michelis said.

On his fifth visit here in two years, de Michelis made it clear that Europe sees this process of integration as linked entirely to momentum on the Arab-Israeli peace process. De Michelis said next Tuesday he would discuss with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in Moscow ways to increase EC help in convening the Middle East peace conference.

He indicated that, to pursue what the EC was offering, Israel would have to adopt a negotiating stance more in line with the thinking in Brussels. The benefits of closer integration would include freer movement of goods, services, and people. But closer ties would also require Israel to adopt EC directives on a variety of issues ranging from food standards to environment policy.

De Michelis had earlier met Defence Minister Moshe Arens and said he noted "a partial improvement of the situation in the territories with the reopening of all the universities except Bi'r Zayt. "I also conveyed to the minister in the strongest terms that the continuing establishment of settlements is a danger to the peace process."

He said both Israel and the Palestinians would pay a price if their conflict continued indefinitely. "Our offer of integration with the EC—and I think we could have a similar, if not identical, relationship with the Palestinians—is an offer of tools to allow both sides to seize the opportunities of the present situation."

Romanian President Departs After Visit

TA0509184191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1705 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] Romanian President Ion Iliescu this evening concluded his four-day visit to Israel, saying that today there is a new basis for tightening the political, economic, and technological relations with Israel. Our correspondent Merom Tzur was at the airport:

[Begin recording] [Tzur] As in every general declaration at the conclusion of an official visit by a foreign head of state, Romania's President Ion Iliescu used diplomatic language in saying that in his visit has turned a new page in relations with Israel.

[Iliescu in English, here and below] It was a starting point for a new period of our bilateral relations, and we have stressed the common will and the common option to create a frame....

[Tzur] In my talks here, the president said, we stressed the common will and the possibility of creating a broader

framework for the relations on the political level, exchange of information, and economy. Iliescu pointed at the economic revolution all of East Europe is undergoing:

[Iliescu] Now, even Romania is going to market economy, where not the government is now deciding all the problems—the government is only facilitating the contacts—but the real, concrete problems has to be decided in direct contacts between businessmen.

[Tzur] We have greatly enjoyed the open atmosphere here in Israel, the president said; this is a good basis for broader cooperation in the future. [end recording]

Arens Suspends Cutback of Troops in Territories

TA0409115291 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
4 Sep 91 p A2

[Report by 'Imanu'el Rosen]

[Text] Defense Minister Moshe Arens has ordered a freeze on reductions of IDF [Israel Defense Forces] troops in the territories.

Over the past few weeks, the order of battle has been cut back mainly in the Gaza Strip and on the West Bank. Because Jewish settlers and senior IDF officers claimed that the decrease in troops made it more difficult to confront violence in the territories, Defense Minister Arens decided to suspend the cuts in the order of battle. On the other hand, the chief of staff and his deputy support continued cutbacks.

At the same time, Deputy Chief of Staff Amnon Shahaq has called for a new attitude toward "the calendar days" [specific dates on which the Arab population sometimes riots]. Until now the Army has marked dozens of "calendar days" on its "operational graph," and every such day has required reinforcements. The additional allocation of troops has affected training and military courses. Shahaq decided that there would be fewer "calendar days" necessitating reinforcements and ordered smaller allocations of troops on the remaining dates.

A senior officer who commented on this issue told MA'ARIV: "Reducing the scope of forces in the territories is crucial. It is an inseparable part of the decision to scale down the order of battle involved in routine activity along the borders. So far, it has not been proved that fewer troops leads to more violence. This policy must be implemented bravely and resolutely, especially on the West Bank.

Bi'r Zayt University Closure Extended

TA0109070291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
0600 GMT 1 Sep 91

[Text] Major General Dani Yatom, commander of the Central Command, has extended the closure of Bi'r Zayt University by three months. It will be the only university in the territories to remain closed in the new academic year.

Our correspondent Moti Amir adds that 440,000 students in the territories are resuming studies as of this morning. [Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0500 GMT on 1 September adds that "the bureau of the coordinator of activities in the territories has announced that every school whose students take part in riots or other acts of violence will be closed until further notice."]

A change introduced by the Judea and Samaria Civil Administration this year makes all 10th grades part of the junior high schools. That will place them within the bounds of compulsory education, for which no tuition is charged.

Statistics Show Increase in Jewish Population

TA0609100991 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT
in Hebrew 6 Sep 91 p 1

[Report by Nehama Dowek]

[Text] Israel's population is now 5.1 million, an increase of 6.2 percent compared with the beginning of last year. The Jewish population stands at 4.1 million, an increase of 6.7 percent. Most of the growth was due to immigration, with the arrival of 230,000 immigrants during the past year. The Jewish population increased altogether by 256,000.

Amal Leader Says Hostage Talks at 'Dead End'*NC0509161391 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
1530 GMT 5 Sep 91*

[Text] Husayn al-Musawi [name as heard], leader of the Islamic Amal Movement, has revealed that the current negotiations concerning the hostages have reached a dead end. He said there is arrogance and hegemony in the Israeli demand concerning the Israeli prisoners, adding that no one can accept this demand. Al-Musawi noted that direct negotiations with Israel are out of the question.

Israelis Blamed for Deadlock*NC0509165491 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic
1615 GMT 5 Sep 91*

[Text] Hizballah official Husayn al-Musawi [as heard] has said that the negotiations to exchange the Western hostages and other captives are deadlocked because the Islamic groups will not submit to the Israeli conditions.

He said the Israeli demand regarding the Israeli captives is characterized by arrogance and domination. He noted that no one can respond to these demands. He pointed out that there is no opportunity for direct dialogue with Israel. He said that the captors who released British citizen John McCarthy and U.S. national Edward Tracy expect Israel to release prisoners in return. He said that UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar will discuss the hostages issue with Iranian officials during his visit to Tehran next week. He stressed that the Iranian parties wish to end this issue but in a just way.

He denied that Israeli aviator Ron Arad was handed over to the Iranians. He said that Arad is being held by Muslim Lebanese and is most likely alive. He said he believes that Israel's release of any detainee definitely will lead to a solution, and that the release of Shaykh 'Abd-al-Karim 'Ubayd may greatly contribute to the release of the other Western hostages.

South 'Open Wound' Until Israel Withdraws*NC0509171191 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
1530 GMT 5 Sep 91*

[Text] In an interview with the QATARI NEWS AGENCY, Prime Minister 'Umar Karami said that there will always be an open wound in the south until the Israeli occupation ends. Karami confirmed his commitment to national resistance as one of two options to liberate the land. Karami said we cannot disarm the resistance as long as the occupation persists.

The prime minister noted that some weapons still are in public hands, adding that this is particularly true for light weapons and that the time is not right yet for collecting these weapons. The prime minister said the time will come when the only weapons left in the country will be in the hands of the lawful forces.

Karami said the higher councils of Lebanon and Syria will meet soon to conclude agreements on the economy, security, transit, tariffs, and trade.

Role for UNIFIL Seen in Bra'shit Area*NC0509193391 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
1900 GMT 5 Sep 91*

[Text] The Council of Ministers has entrusted Foreign Minister Attorney Faris Buwayz with asking the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] to assume security in the hills surrounding the township of Bra'shit.

The Council of Ministers formed a ministerial committee chaired by Prime Minister Attorney 'Umar Karami and comprising as members Information Minister Albert Mansur and Ministers Michel al-Murr, Butrus Harb, Muhsin Dallul, and George Sa'adah to prepare a report on the formation of an independent information authority and its powers.

Radio Cites 'Awn Comments to French Magazine*NC0609103191 (Clandestine) Voice of the
Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0900 GMT 6 Sep 91*

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buways summoned French Ambassador Daniel Husson to his office yesterday to ask him to explain statements reportedly made by General Michel 'Awn. The French ambassador emphasized that Gen. 'Awn has been abiding by his commitment not to make any statements or engage in any political activity.

The French magazine PARIS MATCH, however, today published remarks attributed to Gen. 'Awn, in which he claimed that he was not bound by the agreement between the Lebanese and French Governments. After attacking the government and President al-Hirawi, 'Awn said he had not taken part in any negotiations on returning funds in his possession to the Lebanese state. He added: When I was in my gilded cage at the French Embassy, I was freer than President al-Hirawi. 'Awn indicated that he sees himself as Lebanon's liberator and will continue to do so. He said that he is now more determined than ever to continue his mission and that he has confidence in the Lebanese people who, he claimed, will rise up before free elections are held.

Gen. 'Awn said he did not consider himself an exile but an ordinary traveler.

Afghanistan

Rebel Faction Says Fall of Najibollah Imminent

BK0609010491 Hong Kong AFP in English 1732 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, Sept 5 (AFP)—The powerful Afghan resistance faction Hezb-e Eslami, predicting the "imminent" fall of President Najibollah, said Thursday the rebel factions should unite and prepare to fill the vacuum.

Qutboddin Hilal, chief of the party's Political Affairs Department, told a press conference that the "Muslim army and civil officers" would "topple Najibollah" and his government in Kabul.

The Hezb would "help expedite the elimination of the illegal regime," he said, adding that it would not hesitate to unilaterally form an interim government.

"The ouster of Najibollah is imminent."

Hilal said events in the Soviet Union were having a "positive" impact on the mojahedin cause and that a government convoy to the Soviet border had recently returned "empty handed." The government in Kabul will not have sufficient fuel and food this winter—"if it survives until then," he said.

In the meantime, however, Hilal said he favoured the sending of a joint mojahedin delegation to the Soviet Union for talks on Afghanistan. But he criticised the holding of the second tripartite conference in Tehran last month without the participation of the "major and most powerful" resistance groups—including his own. The Pakistan-based Afghan provisional government also refused to attend.

"Any solution to the Afghan conflict which is worked out in collaboration with only small and ineffective groups will be unjust and undurable," Hilal said.

His party is not opposed to the political process but wants the mojahedin factions to jointly arrive at a consensus before sitting down with Pakistan and Iran to discuss a settlement in Afghanistan, he added.

Hilal said that the next round of the tripartite conference, in Islamabad, should be held after completion of the necessary groundwork—including the assurance that the Pakistan-based Shiite rebel faction, Shurai Itelaf, would participate.

Otherwise, he warned, the conference would fail to make any headway.

Hilal, denouncing a recent Tehran newspaper call for the assassination of Hezb leader Gulboddin Hekmatyar, said his party had lodged a protest with the Iranian embassy in Islamabad. He demanded an apology.

Najibollah Meets UN Special Envoy in Kabul

LD0409214691 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 4 Sep 91

[Text] The president's press office reported that esteemed Afghan President Najibollah received and spoke this afternoon at the presidential office with Benon Sevan, undersecretary general and special envoy of His Excellency Javier Perez de Cuellar, the UN secretary general and coordinator of the UN humanitarian and economic assistance to Afghanistan.

At this meeting, also attended by presidential aide Mohammad Eshaq Tokhi, Benon Sevan passed information to the Afghan president on the UN efforts and plans for a political and peaceful solution to the Afghanistan issue and the statement by the UN secretary general in this respect, the stance of the relevant parties to the UN Secretary General's plan; recent developments in this respect and the favorable international atmosphere created for the sound solution of such issues.

In recalling with satisfaction the efforts made by His Excellency the UN secretary general and his His Excellency special envoy to end the war and restore peace in Afghanistan, the esteemed president of Afghanistan then spoke about the plans and actual actions taken by the Afghan Government to accelerate the process of finding a political and peaceful solution to the issues; and he expressed the readiness of the Afghan Government to welcome every endeavor or action that could accelerate a just and acceptable solution to the Afghanistan issue and to securing peace and stability in war-stricken Afghanistan.

Esteemed Najibollah expressed hope that the UN organization will continue to carry out its commitments to the people of Afghanistan effectively and to their advantage.

Esteemed Najibollah, president of Afghanistan, added: Restoring and strengthening peace in the country is the people's wish and society's immediate demand. On the other hand international developments have also provided a favorable climate for a political and peaceful solution to the issues and regional tensions. Therefore all the parties involved in the Afghan issue must begin inter-Afghan talks with a realistic vision and taking into consideration the wishes and urgent and serious interest of the people and country who want peace and a political and peaceful solution to the issues. To realize this objective the Afghan Government is prepared to give every cooperation and assistance required. Of course, we expect the UN organization to accelerate its endeavor in this respect.

Prime Minister Khaliqyar Meets Palestinian Envoy

LD0609102391 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] The prime minister's press office reports that Prime Minister Fazl Haq Khaliqyar today received

Jum'ah al-Naji, Palestinian ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Kabul. Talks were conducted on the fraternal and friendly relations between the Muslim people of Afghanistan and Palestine. The Palestinian ambassador conveyed to our esteemed prime minister the greetings and best wishes of His Excellency Yasir 'Arafat, head of the State of Palestine. He briefed the prime minister about the rightful cause of the people of Palestine and the principled stance of the State of Palestine toward the peaceful solution of the issue of Afghanistan. He added that the fraternal nation of Palestine will continue its support for the peaceful solution to the issue of Afghanistan.

For his part, esteemed Khaliqyar expressed the support of the people of Afghanistan for the rightful cause of the fraternal people of Palestine. He talked about the current moves to ensure peace and reconciliation, and about those measures taking place in the country based on the national reconciliation and peaceful policies of the Afghan Government in various spheres of the socioeconomic life of the people of Afghanistan under the leadership of esteemed Najibollah, president of Afghanistan.

Khaliqyar, Turkish Diplomat Discuss Trade 2 Sep

LD0309034991 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 2 Sep 91

[Text] The prime minister's office reports that esteemed Fazl Haq Khaliqyar this morning received at his Aykut Cetrige, charge d'affaires of Turkish embassy in Kabul, for a working visit.

During the meeting, esteemed Khaliqyar recalled with praise the common religious aspects; the traditional friendly relations; and the ancient historic, economic, cultural, and trade ties between both countries. He hoped that these relations develop further in the various channels, especially in the sphere of supply and purchase of primary goods and exchanges of trade, cultural, and economic delegations, in light of the extensive possibilities the development of mutual cooperation with the Turkish Republic.

For his part, the charge d'affaires of the Turkish Embassy expressed the interest of his country in the expansion of friendly relations with the Republic of Afghanistan and the consolidation of economic, trade, and cultural ties. He pledged to carry out the necessary measures in connection with primary needed goods.

He presented a series of proposals to esteemed Khaliqyar about the possibilities for purchasing primary goods from Turkey and about furthering trade between both countries. Of course, a series of measures will be taken to realize these, based on the mutual interest of the people of the both countries.

Khaliqyar Receives Bulgarian Ambassador

LD0309010791 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 2 Sep 91

[Text] The Press office of the Prime Ministry reported that the prime minister, esteemed Fazl Haq Khaliqyar this morning received Valantin Gatsinski, ambassador of the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

The esteemed prime minister of Afghanistan spoke during the meeting about further widening friendly relations and mutual cooperation between the two countries in economic-technical areas and the completion of work of joint projects and new projects that are being opened with Bulgarian assistance in Kabul and Balkh Province. He emphasized speeding up the work of these projects.

The ambassador of the People's Republic of Bulgaria expressed readiness in connection with the expansion of Afghanistan-Bulgaria economic and technical cooperation and assured the esteemed prime minister that measures to expand mutual economic-technical cooperation and the speeding up of the completion work of the joint Afghan-Bulgaria joint projects will be taken.

Aid Sought From India, Turkey, Bulgaria

BK0409005691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1638 GMT 3 Sep 91

[Text] Kabul, Sept 3 (AFP)—The Afghan Government, left hanging by a lack of reassurance from Moscow that it can or will ensure supplies of food and fuel for the coming winter, has turned to India, Bulgaria and Turkey for help.

Foreign Office officials Tuesday confirmed state television reports that Prime Minister Fazle Haq Khaliq Yar had met Monday with the ambassadors of Turkey and Bulgaria to urge their governments to find ways to help.

A resistance leader has on the other hand threatened to keep military pressure on Kabul until Moscow ends its support to it.

"Peace efforts would be supplemented by continued military pressure" to topple the Soviet-backed Najibollah regime, Burhanuddin Rabbani, leader of a Pakistan-based mujahedin resistance group, said Monday in Peshawar, Pakistan.

In addition, diplomats said, Vice President Abdul Rahim Hatiff, who flew to New Delhi on Monday, was on a mission to urge India to add to its contribution of 50,000 tonnes of wheat, now being flown into the capital on Soviet planes.

Soviet and Indian diplomats confirmed last weekend that the only wheat the Soviet supply planes were carrying into Kabul was Indian, and that no Soviet wheat had been sent to Kabul since the new leadership in Moscow took over.

The government search for alternate supplies went public after the return to Kabul on Monday of Soviet Ambassador Boris Pashtoukhov, who diplomats here said had apparently brought no reassurance from Moscow on winter supplies to the Afghan capital of some 1.5 million people.

In the past two winters Kabul has been kept alive by the Soviet airlift of food, fuel and ammunition, but Soviet diplomats have indicated in the past week that conditions are worse and "markets empty" in the Soviet Union.

Afghan state television quoted the ambassadors of Bulgaria and Turkey as saying consideration would be given to the requests, but no further details were available.

The government here, meanwhile, denied on television what it called "rumours" of the state buying flour on the local market, and assured civil servants that a lack of flour rations in the past had been due to "temporary difficulties."

The KABUL TIMES headlined Tuesday a three-day old speech by President Najibullah in which he reminded Moscow of its "moral and political obligations" to Afghanistan, which some officials described privately as a thinly disguised appeal for a reassurance on supplies.

In Kabul streets and in the bazaar, the main commercial centre of the city, meanwhile, many traders asked foreign journalists why the United States did not supply food.

"There is no more Soviet Union, only a lot of republics, and the United States wants a settlement to the Afghan war. Why doesn't the U.S. help out?" said one trader.

United Nations relief officials who have for the past two years been supplying humanitarian aid to the poor living both in the Soviet-backed government's areas of control, including Kabul, and areas controlled by the mujahedin resistance, said they saw the main fears for the harsh Afghan winter in the fuel shortage.

"You can forget the Soviet contribution," said a senior U.N. official here, referring to Soviet pledges to the United Nations of food and fuel supplies.

"There is wheat and at a pinch it could stretch throughout the country, but it cannot be taken to shortage areas like Kabul, and (the central province of) Ghor without fuel."

Unofficial reports said the Afghan Airforce had cut down sorties due to fuel worries, while workers at many government offices said their (offices were) conserving fuel.

Over 200 Dead in Rival Mujahedin Faction Clashes

LD0309141791 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network
in Dari 1330 GMT 3 Sep 91

[Text] 100 individuals belonging to the extremist group of Golboddin [Hekmatyar] and other groups who were

captured in the course of recent clashes in areas of Konar province were shot dead the day before yesterday in Tangi Zaher area, Chawki district by members of the Jamilolahman group.

Witnesses said that two days after the death of Mawlawi Jamilolahman, his group decided to kill all individuals of the rival groups that they had arrested in the recent clashes in Konar Province. After the death of the arrested members, the Golboddin group subjected the positions and centers of the Jamilolahman group in the Asadabad and Sarkani areas to intensive attacks. As a result, 104 members of Jamilolahman's group including 5 Arab citizens were killed, and 180 of them were captured by Golboddin's group. Several positions and centers of the rival group in the aforementioned regions have been occupied by Golboddin groups. Clashes between rival groups in Konar are continuing.

Cease-Fire Announced

BK0409003291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1653 GMT
3 Sep 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, Sept 3 (AFP)—The Saudi-backed Afghan resistance faction Jamiat-Ud-Dawa said here Tuesday it had agreed to a ceasefire with the rival Hezb-i-Islami in the eastern Konarha Province of Afghanistan.

The ceasefire was mediated by a Jirga, or committee of elders, following the August 30 assassination of Jamiat leader Maulvi Jamilur Rehman, the new chief of the faction told a press conference.

Maulvi Samiullah succeeded Rehman, who was shot dead by an Egyptian Arab in Pakistan's tribal area of Bajaur following armed clashes between the two factions in Konarha, which reportedly left hundreds of casualties.

He said the Hezb, headed by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, had seized control of "some parts" of Konarha in its pre-ceasefire "onslaught," but added that "we shall honour our commitment to the (Jirga)."

The Hezb said it had driven out the Jamiat from Asadabad, capital of Konarha.

Samiullah said Rehman's murder was a conspiracy of both "internal and external" elements, but declined to identify anyone pending completion of an ongoing probe by the party.

He said they had used an Arab to drive a wedge between Afghans and Arabs and stop the assistance the Jamiat-ud-Sawa was receiving from Arab countries.

Samiullah said Arabs had played an important role in the Afghan jihad, or holy war, and that their relations with the Afghan people would remain strong.

He said the Jamiat would not accept any formula for a political settlement in Afghanistan which negates Rehman's mission of establishing an Islamic government in Afghanistan.

Samiullah said his faction had attended the first tripartite conference in Islamabad in July, but had not participated in the subsequent second round in Tehran because it was "not invited."

The conference, attended by Pakistan, Iran and mojahedin factions based in the two countries, discussed ways of finding a political solution in light of United Nations proposals calling for an intra-Afghan dialogue to set up a transitional administration in Kabul pending elections.

Bangladesh

Joint Economic Committee With Sri Lanka Meets

BK0509134591 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh External Service in English 1230 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] The second meeting of the Bangladesh-Sri Lanka joint committee for economic cooperation ended in Dhaka Wednesday [4 September] with both sides agreeing to explore new areas of bilateral economic relations. An agreed minutes was signed after three days of deliberations on a wide range of issues, including trade, industry, agriculture, shipping, civil aviation, tourism, cultural exchange, and technical cooperation. The minutes was signed by Economic Relations Division Secretary Enam Ahmed Chowdhury on behalf of Bangladesh, while (P. Weerasakera), secretary, Ministry of State for Trade and Commerce for the Sri Lankan Government.

Sri Lanka agreed to provide training assistance on coconut seed garden and home garden management and expert services on coconut breeding. Setting up of a joint venture jute mill in Colombo was also discussed in the three-day meeting and the Sri Lankan side agreed to convey the particulars of a proposal from a Bangladeshi entrepreneur to Sri Lankan parties who might be interested in the project.

The third meeting of the joint economic committee will be held in Colombo next year. A ministerial-level meeting will also be held in the Sri Lankan capital early next year.

India

Minister Warns Pakistan Against 'Misadventure'

BK0509161691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] A high-powered committee with the defense minister as its chairman is to review the existing pension structure and other retirement benefits of ex-servicemen. Announcing this in the Lok Sabha today amidst thumping of desks, the Defense Minister Mr. Sharad Pawar said the committee will involve a feasible approach for improving retirement benefits of defense pensioners and will specify guidelines to deal with the cases in a time-bound manner. The committee will submit its report by the end of the current year. The

defense minister made this announcement while replying to the debate on the demands for grants of his ministry which the house later approved by a voice vote after rejecting all cut motions.

Sternly warning Pakistan against any misadventure, the defense minister said it has already received a befitting reply at Kirni in the Punch sector in Jammu and Kashmir. Retreating Pakistani troops were seen carrying away 20 bodies. The casualties on the Indian side were one officer and seven other ranks. He said after the local commanders' meeting the situation is peaceful.

Charging Pakistan with adopting a self-contradictory posture on bilateral ties, Mr. Pawar said the ground realities (?must) show improvement for peace and friendship. He said India on its part does not want war and will continue to strive for improved relations with all neighbors, including China. He said it is rather unfortunate that Islamabad is getting help from Beijing in its clandestine weapons-oriented program.

On the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, the defense minister made it categorically clear that India will not sign the treaty as it is not in the country's interest.

Turning to India-Soviet ties, Mr. Pawar allayed the apprehensions of the members that there is going to be any setback to India's defense preparedness because of developments in the Soviet Union. He said India-U.S. relations are also on a firm ground, and efforts are now on to extend the same to the defense sector. He said the change in the U.S. stand on Kashmir is a welcome development.

Rao Meets With German Economic Minister 5 Sep

BK0609054491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] India and Germany have started discussions on increasing their economic cooperation. The subject is understood to have been mooted when the German minister for economic cooperation, Carol-Dieter Spranger, called on the prime minister, Mr. Narsimha Rao, in Bonn last night. AIR [All India Radio] special correspondent Bhopal Inder Saini covering the prime minister's visit reports:

[Begin recording] The importance attached to economic issues during the prime minister's three-day visit to Germany is evident from the fact that Mr. Narasimha Rao's first official engagement after reaching Bonn was a meeting with the German minister for economic affairs. The emphasis on stepping up economic cooperation will continue today when Mr. Rao attends the meeting of German and Indian industrialists. The economic reforms undertaken by the Narasimha Rao government have created an atmosphere where the two countries can cooperate fruitfully in the economic sphere. Significantly, Germany is the first foreign country to be visited by Mr. Rao after becoming prime minister. Mr. Rao will also be meeting the German chancellor today where,

apart from economic issues, the two leaders are expected to discuss the transformation of the world scene as a result of the upheavals in the Soviet Union and the East European countries. [end recording]

Germany is already India's largest trading partner in Europe and there are good prospects of increasing the bilateral trade further. The prime minister along with German chancellor will inaugurate the Festival of India tomorrow.

Vice President Sharma Meets Afghan Counterpart
LD0609082191 Kabul BAKHTAR in English
0532 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] Kabul, Sep. 5, BAKHTAR—'Abdul Rahim Hatif, vice-president of the Republic of Afghanistan, met his Indian counterpart, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, vice-president of the Republic of India, in New Delhi on Sep. 4, 1991, reports a BAKHTAR correspondent from New Delhi.

In this meeting, he interlocutors emphasised on the ever further strengthening and expansion of mutual relations and cooperations between the two countries.

Report says A. Rahim Hatif attended a banquet arranged by Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma in his honour in the Hyderabad Palace of New Delhi on the same day.

The banquet was attended by the chairman of Indian parliament, deputy Senate speaker, some cabinet as well as parliament members, influential figures and scholars of India, ambassador of Afghanistan to New Delhi and staffs of this embassy.

The Indian vice-president in his speech expressed full support of India of the five-point peace plan of the UN secretary general on the political settlement of the Afghan problem.

He stressed that India will continue her constructive efforts for the acceleration of this process for the ensurance of peace in Afghanistan and is in favour of the political solution of the Afghan problem by the Afghans themselves without foreign intervention as well as an independent, non-aligned and powerful Afghanistan. Dr. S.D. Sharma, while recalling the friendly relations and cooperations existing in the political, economic, trade, and cultural areas between the two countries, considered them as very useful.

He expressed satisfaction with the further consolidation and expansion of these relations.

Reciprocally, 'Abdul Rahim Hatif, while expressing his satisfaction with the results of his visit and meetings with the Indian authorities, thanked for the hospitality rendered to him by the Indian side. He stressed the expansion and consolidation of friendship and cooperation between the two countries.

Punjab 'Militants' Shoot at Trains, Kill 2

BK0609053691 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 0245 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] In Punjab, militants fired at two running trains killing two women and injuring 18 passengers near Ludhiana early this morning. According to an official spokesman, 12 of the injured persons and one of the deceased are believed to be Pakistani nationals.

Congress-I Says Punjab Poll Issue Up to Parties

BK0509150291 Delhi All India Radio Network
in English 1430 GMT 5 Sep 91

[Text] The Congress-I says that cancellation of the electoral process in Punjab depends on all political parties and not on any single party. Talking to newsmen in New Delhi today, the party spokesman, Mr. Chandulal Chandrakar, said if all political parties agree to the cancellation, all legal and necessary steps will then be taken. He was responding to a question if his party would like the entire electoral process to start afresh to facilitate its participation in the Punjab poll. The poll was deferred till the 25th of this month by the chief election commissioner.

Iran

Velayati Interviewed on Current Issues

NC0309083591 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI
in Persian 25 Aug 91 pp 14, 15

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati by unidentified JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI correspondent; place and date not given]

[Text] [JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] The Islamic Republic of Iran exerted many efforts to make Iraq change its stances throughout the period before the commencement of the allied attack on Iraq. Did you foresee the allied attack on Iraq?

[Velayati] We warned the Iraqi officials in the various discussions that we had with them. This is proven by the agenda of our talks. It was very clear that the allies would attempt an attack. We even conveyed this message to Iraq in one way or another outside the framework of our political discussions and meetings. We told Iraq clearly that the Islamic Republic of Iran strongly believed that if Iraq remained in Kuwait, war would be inevitable.

Even at the open and closed sessions of the Majles the Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran propounded its view that war by the allied forces against Iraq was inevitable. During my meetings with the esteemed Majles deputies, I told them the allied forces would not allow Iraq to devour Kuwait and a peaceful solution could be achieved if this [absorption of Kuwait] could be avoided through political talks. Otherwise a military solution would be sought.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] The feeling is that the Iraqi regime was not counting on a war.

[Velayati] Yes, that is so. Our assumption too is that Iraq miscalculated and perhaps some of the Western countries are also to blame for helping Iraq to miscalculate.

I am referring specifically to the Iraqi Government's talks with the American ambassador in Baghdad before Iraq's aggression against Kuwait. The Iraqi side published reports on these discussions later on. Actually we can say that the Iraqis were persuaded and that several factors contributed to this. One of these elements was the Iraqi regime's "self-conceit," which caused the Iraqi regime to ignore realities. This great weak point was exploited by some of the Western regimes to encourage Iraq. The Iraqis did not conceive at all that an attack would take place, and they thought that the West was bluffing.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] In other words, was the West trying to plunge Iraq into a maelstrom?

[Velayati] The West wanted to find a strong justification for crushing the Iraqi regime, which was armed to the teeth.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] One assessment is that the oil war was the continuation of and an epilogue to the imposed war so that the remainder of the arms that Iraq had been given to use against the Islamic Republic of Iran would be destroyed. How correct is this assessment?

[Velayati] Linking this war to the "oil war" may not depict all the aspects of the situation. The Persian Gulf was an important region even before oil was discovered. Looking at history, we can see that the Dutch, the Portuguese, and the British were all seeking domination over the Indian Ocean, East Africa, and Southeast Asia, and their most important bridgehead was the Persian Gulf. Even before that the Persian Gulf was always considered a strategic part of the world. Of course, the discovery of oil, gas, and other energy sources has added to the significance of this region. But there definitely are other elements that have also been effective in granting it this significance.

The region's energy resources have constituted an important element in the West's decisions on the Persian Gulf. But they have not been the only element. The destruction of Iraq's strategic arms and surplus weaponry was definitely among these elements. The West gave these arms to the Iraqi regime in order to annihilate the Islamic Republic. But after the Islamic Republic's eight years of resistance on the battlefields and its two years of resistance on the international political scene, the West did not have a special role for the Iraqi regime in the region. Therefore, the weapons had to be destroyed. Thus, it encouraged the Iraqi regime and plunged it into a maelstrom so that its surplus weapons would be destroyed. But, of course, all the weapons were not destroyed in the war.

This is why the West's efforts on the international scene for the annihilation of all of Iraq's weapons are continuing. The West no longer wants Iraq to be a threat to the region.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] The Pentagon and General Schwarzkopf, commander of the allied forces, stated that Iraq is no longer a threat to regional countries. What, in your opinion, do these remarks mean? Are they an overt effort to preserve and to stabilize Saddam, or is there another intention behind them? Let us not forget that until recently the allies linked regional security to Saddam's overthrow.

[Velayati] One of the assessments may be that the effort is to preserve the Iraqi regime. But there is also another assessment; Iraq is not now a threat to the region, at least not so big a threat as it was before it attacked Kuwait. Now a large part of Iraq's military potential has been destroyed. But is even that military potential that Iraq has at its disposal now considered to be a threat to the region? Apparently Iraq is no longer a serious threat to the region as it was before the attack on Kuwait. But as for the assessment that the West wants to preserve the Iraqi regime, I should say that in the world today there is no longer room for acts like those that were perpetrated by the Iraqi regime and the world does not accept a centralized government like the Iraqi Government that is based on unrealistic and unprincipled dreams.

It seems that no one will now want to resort to old and tattered methods and to invest in such a regime. The conclusion that we draw is that we may not be able to say definitely that the West is thinking of preserving the Iraqi regime.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] One of the reasons for the West's delay in overthrowing Saddam's regime may be the Islamic Revolution. Many Western analysts expressed the view that despite the possible dangers that Saddam's regime poses to the West, it is necessary to confront the propagation of the ideas of the Islamic Revolution or, in other words, Saddam's regime may be needed, just as it was used at the beginning of the revolution and the outset of the imposed war. How do you view this?

[Velayati] There is no doubt that some countries, like America, are not happy with the expansion of the Islamic Revolution. But as for using Saddam's regime as a means to confront the Islamic Revolution, I want to say that with the existence of "guided democracy" today, there is no longer a need to support a centralized and one-party regime like the Iraqi regime.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] How do you explain the fact that the allied forces halted the war immediately after the Iraqi withdrawal behind Iraqi borders?

[Velayati] Maybe they thought that if the regime was removed, Iraq would face a vacuum that would be filled by those who are not in concordance with the West. The uprising of the Iraqi Muslims in central, southern, and

then northern Iraq increased their doubts regarding the need to continue military pressure against the Iraqi regime.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] This act by Iraq set off a wave of tragedies and calamities for the Iraqi people. Even the allied attacks were directed principally against the Iraqi people and Iraq's economy. The Iraqi people's lives were harmed, and Iraq's defeated army made the Iraqi people its target. Naturally, a large number of Iraqis fled outside the borders, and the Islamic Republic of Iran received the largest number of refugees. What steps have been taken for the safe return of the Iraqi refugees to their country?

[Velayati] The Islamic Republic of Iran continues its contacts with the organizations that deal with refugee affairs and has exerted its efforts for the safe return of the refugees to their homes. Meanwhile, contacts have also been made with some of the countries that have had to face this problem—like Turkey and Syria—and we have tried to exert joint efforts on the international scene. But despite all the efforts, I should say that the refugees have numerous health, housing, food, and psychological problems. Not only are the Iraqi refugees facing these problems, but the Iraqi people too are facing numerous problems. I should say that unfortunately all these problems have been inflicted on the Iraqi people by the Iraqi regime and that the problems of Iraq have become part of the series of complicated international problems for which no favorable solutions can be easily envisaged.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] The allies proposed the creation of a security zone in northern Iraq as a solution and attempted to do so. But all activities halted before this plan materialized, and it apparently failed. What was the objective behind these efforts? Do the allies have another intention—namely, the formation of a small Israel under the label of free Kurdistan—in mind?

[Velayati] I am not sure that saying that the efforts by the Western allies to form a secure zone failed is close to reality. Sometimes the West adopts some decisions, carries out consultations, and has things in mind that are different from what it says and does. In other words, appearance differs from reality. The West is after other things; but it is not necessary for them to concentrate and to insist on one plan in order to forward their objectives. The feeling is that the West is after undeclared objectives and that these tools are being used to achieve those objectives. The means that are used are not necessarily a criterion, and in their opinion there is no need for them to insist on using one means. Observe how after the defeat of the Iraqi forces they entered Iraqi territory and stayed there for some time and then left to reenter from the north on another pretext. They stayed there for some time and then retreated. They then attempted a third step which was the formation of the rapid reaction force on Turkey's common border with Iraq. If we do not assume that amid these dispersed and apparently random actions there exists a concrete and calculated idea, then we should assume that the Westerners are

confused and do not know what they are doing. But they have all the means—political, military, economic, and international—in their hands. Unfortunately they do what they want to do, and the Iraqi regime meets all their demands.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Our doubts increase when we see that when the allied forces were concentrated in the south, the operations in the north started. In other words, the possibility for creating a secure zone in the south was greater, but they started their operations in the north. Thus, the suspicions that they have other intentions in mind increase.

[Velayati] Yes, it is exactly as you say. In other words, they have intentions that can be achieved through the occupation or semioccupation of the north rather than the south.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Does the possibility of creating a large, free Kurdistan and the implementation of this colonialist plan exist?

[Velayati] This is an idea that the arrogant powers have been entertaining for a long time, but which did not and does not conform with their other interests in the region. If this did happen, then Turkey would suffer the greatest harm. Therefore, most of the resistance vis-a-vis any overture on this issue would come from Turkey's side.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Currently what is the number of the Iraqi refugees in camps in the Islamic Republic of Iran and what assistance is being extended by international forums in this connection?

[Velayati] It is not easy to give a precise figure because of the influx to and from Iraq. This figure is constantly changing. A recent report states that the Iraqi Army has surrounded Karkuk, and this again is a threat to the Iraqi people and naturally many of them will leave their homes and seek refuge in Iran. During the past months, the situation in Iraqi Kurdistan has not been stable in any way, and threats have been repeated in various forms. The only outcome has been the feeling of insecurity among the Iraqi people who have had to seek refuge in Iran and Turkey. Of course, their passage to Turkey has been blocked. Therefore, they seek refuge in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] What has the volume of international assistance been?

[Velayati] Not much. But there has been assistance.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Can you give a general estimate?

[Velayati] This figure cannot be compared at all with the amount that the Islamic Republic of Iran has spent for the refugees, and this is a fact that the foreigners themselves know too. Hosting more than 1 million refugees throughout this period has cost a lot of money. At the

time when the number of refugees was more than \$1 million, reports by officials put the money that was spent daily at about \$15 million.

In other words, the refugees' expenses are about \$450 million per month and—in comparison—foreign assistance is very minimal. But the point that should be noted here is that despite the problems that some countries had, they extended assistance as a humanitarian and symbolic gesture, and this assistance was more moral than material and was a show of sympathy toward the Iraqi refugees.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Under these conditions, some of the Iraqi refugee groups entered into negotiations with the Iraqi regime and a pact was even signed [as published]. How serious do you think this is?

[Velayati] As far as we know, this pact did not reach any final stage. Even if it does, there is no guarantee that it will be implemented in Iraqi Kurdistan. Had there been such a guarantee, then there would have been no clashes and massacres in Irbil, al-Sulaymaniyah, and some other areas at a time when negotiations were going on. Therefore, this shows that even if a pact is signed, there is no guarantee that it will be implemented in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Meanwhile, we have information that differences have emerged among those who believed that an agreement should be signed with the Iraqi regime, and not all Kurdish groups think alike. Therefore, the possibility that the peace talks between the Kurds and the Iraqi regime will reach a serious conclusion is slim.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Some of the Iraqi Kurdish groups have good relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Have they explained to us why they are carrying out negotiations with the Iraqi regime?

[Velayati] The hopes of some of these groups were dashed after what happened and because of the massacres that took place before the peace talks, and they were unable to continue their struggle as they should have. Actually, their disappointment at not being able to achieve anything through struggle was their justification for wanting to talk with the Iraqi regime.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] On the whole, was this not to their detriment and did it not break their common front?

[Velayati] It is up to the Iraqi people—both the Arabs and Kurds and the Shi'ites and Sunnis—to decide their fate. But their steps should be calculated. Events showed that at least some of their calculations were not correct.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] The Foreign Ministry has not stated its official stance on the presence of the rapid reaction forces in Turkey. Is there any specific reason for this?

[Velayati] Basically, we have announced our specific stance on the presence of foreign forces in the region. We oppose the deployment of any foreign force in the region. On this basis, we also oppose the presence of the rapid

reaction forces in Turkey. We have repeatedly stated our clear views to the countries that accept foreign forces. Our opinion on this is extremely explicit and clear.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] On the official level, what is the reason for the double standards used by the West and by the international forums on the refugees in southern and northern Iraq, where some are Shiite and some Sunni? Why did the West keep silent on the incidents in southern Iraq and even France (former French Foreign Minister Claude Cheysson) lauded and supported Saddam for massacring the Shiites in the south?

[Velayati] Of course, the gentleman who made that remark has no rank and responsibility in France. Therefore, his statement is irresponsible. But the West's double standards on the Shiite and Sunni Muslims in Iraq shows that the stance adopted by people who claim to have humanitarian feelings was not humanitarian but only political. On the one hand, these people express concern over the fact that one portion of the people are under pressure and oppression, while on the other hand they remain silent if pressure and oppression are inflicted on a more extensive scale on another portion of the people and do not react as they should.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] In other words, has Mr. Cheysson actually uttered what the West feels deep down in its heart?

[Velayati] When French Foreign Minister Mr. Dumas came to Iran, he only visited the Shiite refugees. We cannot consider Mr. Cheysson's stance to be the stance of the French Government. The situation is not compatible with one person in that country speaking on behalf of everyone. In fact, there are different factions with different ideas in that country. Of course, many of the West's circles chose not to approach the Iraqi people with humanitarian but with political motives. These people are seeking other objectives and are using humanitarian masks in order to achieve these objectives.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] But, at any rate, the suppression of the Shiites is an idea that is favored by the West.

[Velayati] It is not a matter of Shiite and Sunni. These people are worried about revolutionary and Islamic ideas, irrespective of whether these ideas are held by Shiites or Sunnis.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] After the "oil war" the Iraqi regime has been humiliated and is constantly retreating and granting concessions. Does the Baghdad regime not understand the word sovereignty? Can the flight of American aircraft over Iraqi territory be a threat to our national security?

[Velayati] At any rate, we should be careful. Whether the Iraqis let American planes fly over Iraqi territory or not, the Islamic Republic of Iran should be alert and careful, defend its territorial integrity, and heed any plot against the country's independence. If we do not enjoy a strong and united domestic stance, anyone and any country

may covet us. But if we are strong enough to defend ourselves, we should not fear anything.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Has a warning been issued that they should observe a specific border?

[Velayati] Each day our defense and military forces acquire more capability in safeguarding the borders of the Islamic Republic of Iran on sea, on land, and in the air. Of course, there is also constant vigilance.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] During the oil war, the Iraqi regime sent some planes to Iran. What is the fate of these planes? It is said that talks are underway with Kuwait for returning some of the planes that belonged to Kuwait and were brought to Iran by Iraq. Please give some explanations on this.

[Velayati] None of the planes landed in Iran with our agreement. We were faced with a fait accompli. The planes were flying to Iran and were informing us that they were out of fuel and might crash. Therefore, on the basis of international laws, we allowed them to carry out emergency landings. Some of these planes even crashed before landing because of technical problems or lack of fuel. On the basis of international laws, the duty of each country is to allow any plane which is crashing to carry out an emergency landing. Of course, the next phase will also be according to international laws. These planes landed in our country in this way. Some were destroyed, some were downed by American planes on their way, and some landed.

Kuwait informed us that some of its planes had been taken into Iraq by the Iraqi Government during the occupation of Kuwait and that they had been sent to Iran. We carried out studies and saw that some of the planes were similar to what the Kuwaitis had described. Therefore, we informed them, in view of a UN decision that Kuwaiti property that was taken by Iraq to no matter where should be returned to Kuwait, and in view of our friendly relations with Kuwait, that if there are planes in Iran belonging to Kuwait, we have no problems with returning them to Kuwait, and we have also given this information to the Kuwaiti Government. But what will happen to the rest of the planes is something that the United Nations will have to decide. Of course, there are many topics that should be discussed between us and Iraq.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Such as reparations?

[Velayati] Yes. There are various issues that should be discussed. But, of course, all these should be within the framework of international regulations that have been accepted by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Kuwait itself is indebted to the Islamic Republic. That country's ports, roads, and financial capital were at Iraq's disposal during the imposed war. Is there any intention of asking for reparations from Kuwait?

[Velayati] Of course, the Kuwaitis themselves and some other regional countries have confessed their mistakes and that they helped Iraq. The feeling is that these countries are in a state of disillusionment because of the support that they extended to Iraq against Iran. Kuwait has been harmed greatly, and a large part of these losses are a result of its assistance to Iraq. In short, the monster they created hit the very people who created him—in other words, at those who placed arms, money, and facilities at Iraq's disposal.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] In view of the UN experts' report, what is the probability of steps being taken to make Iraq pay war reparations?

[Velayati] We are very hopeful that in the near future the committee on Paragraph 6 of Resolution 598 will be formed and will identify the aggressor. Of course, everyone knows who the aggressor was and it was also proven during the Persian Gulf crisis when a number of heads of state announced that "Iraq was the aggressor against Iran."

Therefore, it is obvious who the aggressor was. But because of international formalities and procedures that should be followed, on the basis of Resolution 598, Paragraph 6, the UN secretary general should form a committee that will have to identify the aggressor. Immediately after the aggressor is identified, it will become obvious that the aggressor should pay reparations. All the world knows that Iraq was the aggressor, and steps have been taken in this direction. The continuation of these steps calls for talks with the United Nations which are continuing. In the near future the UN secretary general is to pay a visit to Iran. During this visit, the issue of war reparations will be among the basic issues that we will discuss with him.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] In view of the current situation when Iraq's economy is almost completely destroyed, in what form do you think these payments will be made by Iraq?

[Velayati] First let the aggressor be identified and then decisions on details will be made in the talks with the United Nations.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] One source of concern is that even though Iraq's war against the Islamic Republic of Iran started 10 years before the war against Kuwait, nevertheless it has been decided to deposit part of Iraq's oil income into a fund for the payment of war reparations to Kuwait. In other words, why are reparations being paid for a war that started 10 years later than the war against the Islamic Republic of Iran?

[Velayati] Unfortunately, this is the outcome of the regrettable structure of the United Nations and of the Security Council, where justice is often a toy in the hands of politicians.

In other words, the United Nations was formed in order to prevent wars and to spread peace and justice

throughout the world. But in practice, the United Nations is often under the influence of the powers with "veto rights." Unfortunately, your question proves this shortcoming in the composition of the United Nations and in how it is run.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Have you protested this yet?

[Velayati] We have stated this on several occasions in our speeches at the United Nations and in our official discussions. But this time it was once again proven that all the UN members and in particular those with veto powers utter very favorable words, but when it comes to deeds, they act according to their political motives.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] It appears that NATO's rapid reaction forces in the region are an element of tension. Have discussions been held with Turkey on this topic so as to put an end to the deployment of these forces?

[Velayati] We have stated our views: We oppose the presence of any foreign force in the region, whether in the Persian Gulf or any other place. At any rate, in principle, the fact that forces from one part of the world are deployed in another area is, first and foremost, aimed at safeguarding these forces' interests. Therefore, naturally in principle we oppose the formation of military bases belonging to the powers with so-called military technology and to industrial powers, especially when these bases are in an area that is more closely linked with our interests. But it is not our intention to force a country to think and to act as we do. Within the area that is under the jurisdiction of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, we do not allow anyone to aggress against our sovereignty, territorial integrity, and rights. As for the other countries, we do not interfere in their domestic affairs. But we have never hesitated to clearly express our views, based on our principles, and we are not ashamed of doing so.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Recently Turkey stated that it considered it its right, within the framework of the allied forces' operations against Iraq, to resort to military operations in northern Iraq. It even stated that it intends to form a security belt in northern Iraq. Even some of the NATO members have opposed this act by Turkey. What is the Islamic Republic's stance on this?

[Velayati] From the outset of the crisis, we have always stressed that the territorial integrity of countries, and in particular of Iraq, should be respected. Our condemnation of and opposition to the occupation of Kuwait by Iraq rested on this principle. It is on the basis of this same principle that we reject the occupation of Iraqi territory by any country or group—whether this is Turkey or not.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Have you reacted in a way as to make Turkey realize that this is a serious issue?

[Velayati] We have always stated this explicitly and this remains our stance.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Some facts and in particular some of the stances by the Turkish press show that this country is tempted to seize Karkuk and the oil of that region and that it has linked the security belt to this issue in such a way as to make the security belt a starting point. Does the danger of Iraq's dismemberment exist?

[Velayati] What has been stated in the Turkish press is not new. In the past, too, the Turkish press published similar remarks. We brought the matter up with the Turkish Government. They have always denied such a decision. As I have already stated, this is something that does not conform with the principles of the Islamic Republic's foreign policy.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Is it possible for Turkey to exploit the existing crises and chaotic conditions in the region?

[Velayati] World and regional conditions do not allow anyone to do so. Iraq's dismemberment is to the benefit of no one, not even Turkey. This is the gist of the matter.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] One of the outcomes of the incidents during the past decade and especially one of the consequences of the oil war was the disintegration of the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC]. This was actually a council that was formed to cooperate with the aggressor who has now been defeated. But today there are some who want to revive this plan under new conditions. What is the Islamic Republic's view on this?

[Velayati] Under what conditions do you mean?

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] In other words, they want to revive the GCC which was formed to cooperate with Iraq and was unsuccessful in another form in the region. Will the GCC be revived if a couple of nations are omitted from it or added to it?

[Velayati] I do not think that the GCC was formed to help Iraq. The GCC was formed to defend the collective interests of the six littoral countries in the southern Persian Gulf. Then they decided to support Iraq. But I consider it improbable that the GCC was formed to support Iraq. These are two separate issues.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Can this be proved?

[Velayati] You prove it.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] All of their efforts were aimed at helping Iraq, and we saw how as soon as one of the member countries—Kuwait—was subjected to aggression, the GCC did not hold even one session on the ministerial level. It did not even issue one statement.

[Velayati] Our assessment is that it was unable to do so. Actually, one of our arguments that we presented during the crisis in our discussions with the countries or sides that were involved in one way or another, was that such formations and regional groupings are not sufficiently effective. We saw that it was not effective during Iraq's attack on Kuwait. But there are two assessments. One is

that they could have been effective but did not act, and the other is that the body was unable to confront Iraq on its own.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] The third is that its mission was something else.

[Velayati] Look! The fact that the GCC called on the West to help it in preventing an Iraqi aggression proves the second assessment that the GCC was unable to prevent an Iraqi aggression on its own. This did not mean that the ability of the GCC was being underestimated. It was realism. In other words, our assessment is that the GCC did not have the military capability to resist Iraq. Actually, this was the point of our criticism when we said: You want to form a body that will defend regional security. But what actually happened showed that your calculations were wrong to begin with, and we said from the very beginning that a regional body cannot function and defend regional security without the presence of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This was one of the reasons behind our call to the GCC members to review their former structure, and we have always warned against the repetition of past mistakes.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] There is one subtle point here: Does the Islamic Republic want to join the GCC, or has this body failed and should all the littoral countries sit and discuss what form a security plan that is needed by the region should take?

[Velayati] As far as I can perceive, the GCC continues to exist, but it should be reconsidered. They have reached the conclusion that they should cooperate with Iran in the region; otherwise, it will be impossible to defend regional security. We welcome this. But the mode of cooperation is something that should be clarified. The main fact is that this was approved by the GCC, and the Islamic Republic's Foreign Ministry was assigned by the Supreme National Security Council to be in contact with the GCC and to form the mode of cooperation between us and the six member countries. Recently we received a letter from the GCC which we discussed at the Supreme National Security Council and we put forth some questions on the letter that they had written and on the wish that they had expressed to cooperate with Iran.

These questions were sent to them and they are to answer in the near future. The answers to these questions will clarify what the mode of cooperation will be in the future.

One point that is clear in the mind of the Islamic Republic of Iran is that we have based future regional security on regional cooperation. We believe that comprehensive political, economic, commercial, technical, and cultural cooperation among these seven countries—that is, Iran and the six southern Persian Gulf countries—will make a serious and major contribution to the preservation of regional security. In other words, a body cannot be formed to guarantee regional security without creating the necessary and natural conditions for it. We

think that the most natural way to achieve regional security is through "regional cooperation."

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Cooperation is possible in two forms. One is in the form of the creation of a common body with the membership of all the related countries, and the other is to deal with each problem individually and sit and discuss what kind of joint cooperation and activities should be carried out in each case.

[Velayati] I think that the second form is a temporary form. What we mean is a long-term organized and basic cooperation.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Apparently efforts are being made to include Egypt and Syria in this. Does the Islamic Republic of Iran have a specific view on this?

[Velayati] Various comments have been made so far on what the GCC has done with Egypt and Syria. These eight countries held a meeting in Cairo immediately after the crisis. The atmosphere was extremely sincere, and everything showed that cooperation among these eight countries was coming into being. This optimism culminated in Damascus, after which hopes of cooperation among the eight started to decline. Of course, the Islamic Republic of Iran always stated its principled stand. We said that if the cooperation is regional, then there is no reason for others outside the region to be included. We have close relations with Syria, and we have no problem in having any kind of cooperation with Syria or with countries that are our and Syria's neighbors. But we made a basic statement. We said that if the cooperation is regional, then it should be regional and among the countries of one region. Later on our statement sparked off a series of political and propaganda attacks by Egypt against the Islamic Republic of Iran, saying that the Islamic Republic of Iran is preventing Egypt's presence in the Persian Gulf. It is true that we opposed this. But let us be frank. Our opposition was not the sole opposition. But it was our opposition that the Egyptians used as a pretext.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Did the problem arise from within the body?

[Velayati] We are not directly aware of what is going on within in order to know if the problem was from within. We cannot definitely say that there were problems from within, but one can assume things. At any rate, the following stages showed that, as was envisaged, cooperation between these six countries and those two countries was not feasible. When we asked some of the GCC members to tell us what spirit prevailed at the Damascus Declaration, they said that this was a new grouping of the Arab League. In view of the problem and discord that emerged in the Arab League after the attack on Kuwait, they started a type of reconstruction in the Arab League.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] That is, was there a ramifications?

[Velayati] The ramification had taken place from the start. It is better to say that it started to split. This group, which formed the majority, and a number of other countries that supported it started a type of revision in the Arab League. At any rate, the assessment by some of the Persian Gulf littoral states was that this has nothing to do with regional cooperation. Therefore, we see that Egypt's assessment was different from the Persian Gulf littoral states' assessment. Now, if the assessment is that the issue is an "inter-Arab" issue, then it has nothing to do with us. It is their own business. We do not oppose Arab countries from cooperating and exchanging views among themselves. What has to do with us is regional cooperation in the Persian Gulf, and we are making progress in this with the GCC members.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Another problem arises in this connection, namely, that some other countries are trying overtly and covertly to play a role in regional security. Among these are India, whose deputy foreign minister visited Iran and some other countries recently with a plan requesting that India too play a role in Persian Gulf security. This is at a time when there is no historical precedent for the presence of Indian forces in the Persian Gulf. America and Britain, in order to maintain a lever for pressure, are also trying to gain a stable role in regional security through support for—and through arms assistance to—the GCC countries. Will this harm Iran's participation in regional security in one way or another?

[Velayati] Let us separate India from America and Britain. The Indians consider the Persian Gulf to be a branch of the Indian Ocean. When they say that they want to participate in regional security, they mean a region that extends to the Indian Ocean. If this is the case, then we do not oppose a type of cooperation among the countries located around the Indian Ocean, one of which is Iran. But this does not mean that the Indians should have a presence in the Persian Gulf; in the same way, we respect the idea that the Asians should have true cooperation among themselves. Recently the Indonesian foreign minister was here. It was decided that we follow this matter up in West Asia and that they follow the matter up in East Asia so that we may be able to establish some sort of cooperation among the various regions on the Asian continent in the future. Let us look at the four existing groups, that is, the Persian Gulf (the GCC plus Iran); SAARC, which is the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation; ASEAN [the Association of South East Asian Nations]; and ECO [the Economic Cooperation Organization, which groups Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey], and at the other groups that are being formed in Asia. For example, in the future there is the possibility that cooperation will emerge between the Far East and Southeast Asian countries as proposed by Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir. This continental cooperation does not contradict but complements regional cooperation. We can have regional cooperation here and also have continental cooperation in another form, like the Europeans. The Europeans have the

Common Market and the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe. In the same way, the Africans have a pact in the east, another in the west of Asia, and another north of the Great Arab Maghreb [geographical designations as published], but all of them are members of the Organization of African Unity. As for America and Britain, the issue is clear to us. Neither of them is a regional country and regional cooperation should be among regional countries.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] The Americans say that the Persian Gulf is a part of their national security borders. What does this mean?

[Velayati] They consider the entire world to be within their national security boundaries. The same proposal that was made by Mr. Mahathir was also made by the Americans, who said that they too should be included in the group that is to be formed in Southeast Asia and the Far East as proposed by the Malaysian prime minister.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Mr. Gorbachev's policies resulted in the alteration of the traditional bipolar system in the world to a unipolar system, and the room for maneuver of the Third World countries, which exploited the differences that existed between the East and the West to their own benefit, has decreased greatly, and they are now suffering more pressures from the existing pole. What is your opinion on this?

[Velayati] It is truly not clear whether the bipolar system was to the benefit of the Third World countries. It is not clear whether the Third World countries had become accustomed to something that was to their benefit.

If the philosophy of the Third World countries is that they should fluctuate between two poles to gain their interests through the differences between the two poles, then this is undoubtedly a wrong philosophy, and it is not clear if it is the most favorable means by which to safeguard the interests of the Third World.

Why should the Third World in general and the Islamic world in particular not think of forming an independent group themselves so that their interests will not be so directly linked with relations between the two super-power poles and so that they will not just barely make ends meet while fluctuating between the two and so that their political-economic situation will not be completely upset by the disintegration of one of the poles? The situation that emerged in the Third World after the disintegration of communism proved that the bipolar system was wrong.

The bipolar system was the outcome of the Yalta Conference during the Second World War. It was 10 years after World War II that the Third World thought of venturing independently and held the Bandung Conference. This was followed by the Brioni conference in Yugoslavia and finally the first session of the Nonaligned Movement was held in Belgrade in 1961.

We saw that it did not take long before the bipolar world was changed into a unipolar world. Of course, we do not believe that a unipolar system will exist in the world in the future. In other words, this unipolar system may only be a transition point. But it is highly possible that in the future the world will not be a unipolar world.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] This is the source of America's concern for meeting which they have called the "new world order." Do you think that if this plan is implemented, America will become the decision maker for the world and the power that will determine the main focus for general world policies and relations, something that will be more to the detriment of the Third World? What harm can Mr. Gorbachev's departure inflict on this plan?

[Velayati] The idea that there should be a new world order is not the Americans' opinion, but a world reality. In other words, after all, the world that was based on a bipolar system now sees that one of its poles has disintegrated. Therefore, a system that was not accepted by us but which existed has disintegrated and a new system should inevitably come into being. Therefore, the fact that a new system which is not similar to the past will come into being is not hideous. An American-style new world order or a system that means the imposition of the will of one superpower on the rest of the world is not accepted. But the fact that a new world order should exist is essentially an accepted fact. But we believe that this new order should be based on the interests of nations. In my opinion, the removal of Mr. Gorbachev from the Soviet Union's political scene will possibly have repercussions on East-West relations and their process of concordance as well as on the American plan known as the "new world order."

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] Actually the world needs a new system. It seems that the conditions are favorable specifically for the world of Islam with its 1 billion population and numerous strategic resources to be able to gain a favorable position in the world's political and economic system. Has a specific opinion been voiced on this by the Islamic Republic of Iran or by other countries?

[Velayati] This was one of the pivots of our remarks at the Islamic Conference Organization's [ICO] foreign ministerial session in Istanbul. The first country to bring this up, as far as I know, was the Islamic Republic of Iran. Finally, this proposal led to the plan for the formation of a committee consisting of some of the countries in order to prepare a plan that will be submitted to the upcoming ICO summit which is to be held in Aban [month beginning 23 October] in the Senegalese capital, Dakar.

[JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI] How do you rate the possibility of unity among Islamic countries and how confident are you that this plan will work?

[Velayati] We hope that this will happen, and we will strive to see that it does. We have a duty that we should

carry out. You can have two approaches to a difficult and complicated problem. You can either ignore the problem, or you can think of a way to solve it.

It seems that we should choose the second alternative. Ignoring a problem does not mean that the problem does not exist.

At any rate, it is a fact that there are many differences among the Islamic countries. But this bitter reality should not prevent us from acting. Efforts may ultimately be in vain, but we will have done our duty as an Islamic country.

Pakistan

Officials Criticize Benazir Bhutto

BK0609060291 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network
in Urdu 0200 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Text] Sheikh Rashid Ahmad, adviser to the prime minister on information and broadcasting, has said the Islamic Democratic Alliance government will fulfill all its promises made during the elections. Addressing a reception in Rawalpindi last night, he said that all possible efforts are being made to solve the people's problems.

Sheikh Rashid Ahmad criticized Ms. Benazir Bhutto, the opposition leader in the National Assembly, for using the scandal of cooperative credit corporations for political gains. He advised her to refrain from issuing statements against the national interests and to adopt the dignified attitude of an opposition leader.

The Punjab chief minister also criticized the cochairperson of the Pakistan People's Party [PPP], Ms. Benazir Bhutto, for using the issue for political gains. Addressing newsmen in Lahore last evening, he said the PPP cochairperson should direct her party workers to repay huge loans taken from the cooperative credit corporations so that depositors can get their money back.

The Northwest Frontier Province ministers, Ali Akhtar Khan Jadoon and (Farid Toofan) have criticized the cochairperson of the Pakistan People's Party for issuing statements on sensitive issues like Pakistan's nuclear program.

Leaders Issue Messages on Defense Day

BK0609035691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network
in Urdu 0200 GMT 6 Sep 91

[Excerpt] Defense of Pakistan Day is being observed today with renewed pledges to safeguard Pakistan's frontiers with the spirit displayed during the 1965 war. The day began with the recitation from the holy Koran and special prayers for the country's unity and stability.

In a message on the occasion, President Ghulam Ishaq Khan said the country's defense is our foremost duty and no effort will be spared to strengthen and make it

self-reliant. He said Pakistan believes in the sovereign equality of all nations and pursues a policy of peace and goodwill toward all neighbors. He said, however, this goodwill has to be reciprocated to promote durable peace in the region. Hegemonistic designs and browbeating will not serve any side's purpose. The president said the past has proved that weakness invites attack from stronger aggressive power. A country with appropriate defense capability and fully prepared to deal with any situation alone can foil nefarious designs of stronger aggressive power.

The president said in light of these facts, Pakistan cannot afford to lower its guard and will continue to do all it can to enable its armed forces to deter aggression.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in his message said the nation is resolved to meet all challenges to the country's security by ensuring continued effectiveness of our defense forces. He assured the nation that the defense will continue to have priority. He emphasized that every

sacrifice will be made to defend the motherland. The prime minister said the people and the armed forces through mutual cooperation will foil the designs of aggressors on both civil and military fronts.

Nawaz Sharif said although Pakistan believes in peace and has no aggressive designs against any neighbor, it is still faced with threats to its security. This is borne out by the fact that large and well-equipped forces continue to be deployed by our adversaries along our borders. The prime minister said the best answer to this threat is to be vigilant and pride ourselves as a self-confident nation. The prime minister said we are spending a large part of our limited resources in the creation and maintenance of a comparatively smaller but effective defense machinery. He said as part of our policy of self-reliance, we have been laying stress on indigenous production of defense equipment and have achieved notable successes. The prime minister said this process will be further accelerated by providing more funds. [passage omitted]